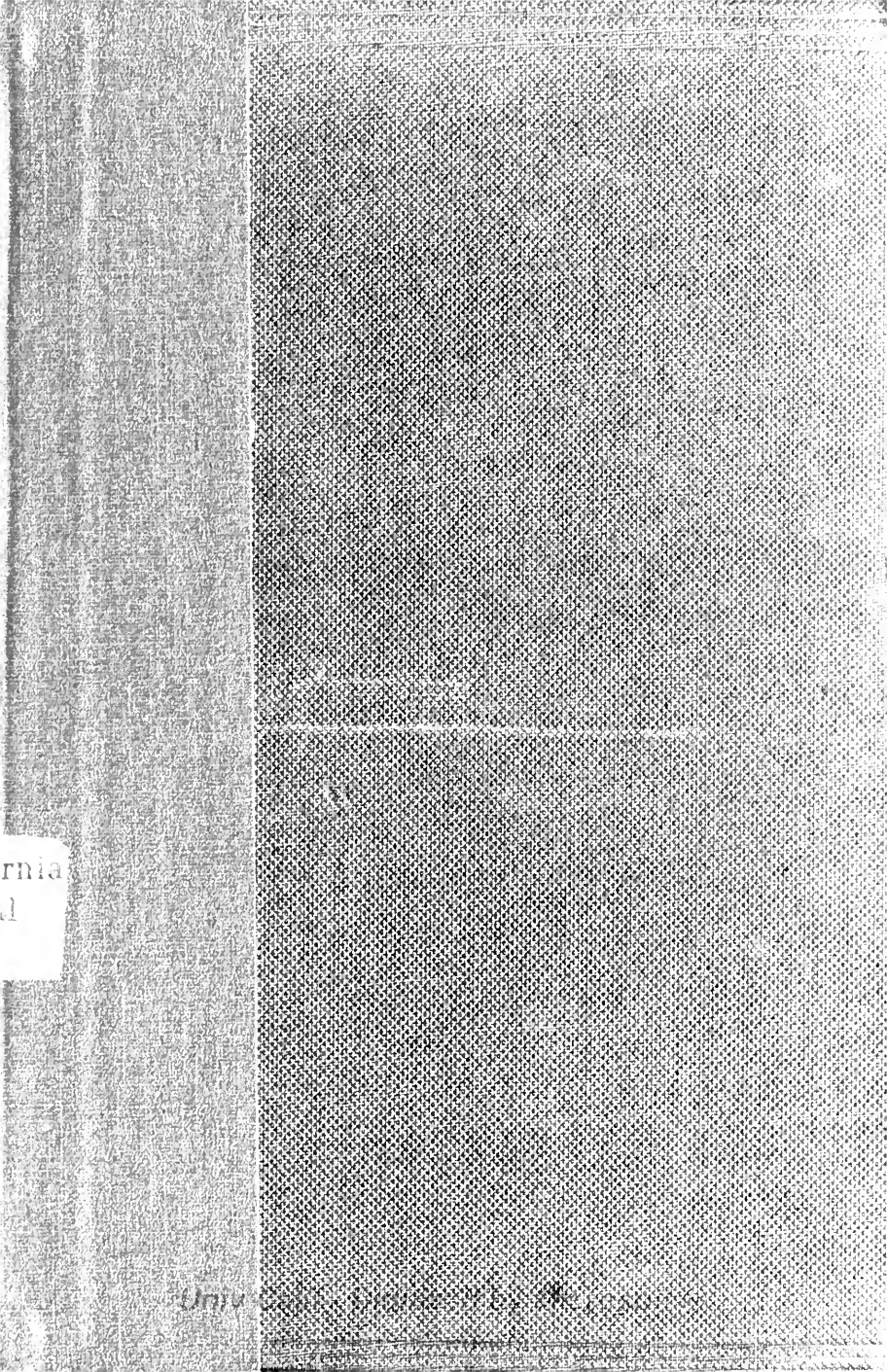

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
AT LOS ANGELES

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Digitized for Microsoft Corporation
by the Internet Archive in 2007.
From University of California Libraries.
May be used for non-commercial, personal, research,
or educational purposes, or any fair use.
May not be indexed in a commercial service.

A RUSSIAN ANTHOLOGY IN ENGLISH

BOOKS BY MR. C. E. BECHHOFER

(1) **Russia at the Cross-Roads.** By C. E. BECHHOFER. With an introduction by A. H. MURRAY.

(2) **Five Russian Plays, with One from the Ukrainian:** Translated from the originals (two by Evreinov, one by Von Vizin, two by Chehov, one by Lesya Ukrainka), by C. E. BECHHOFER.

KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRUBNER & Co., LTD.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

A RUSSIAN ANTHOLOGY IN ENGLISH

Edited by
C. E. BECHHOFER

LONDON :
KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRUBNER & CO., LTD.
NEW YORK : E. P. DUTTON & CO.
1917

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES LIBRARY

PG
3213
R54 r

CONTENTS

	PAGE
EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION	vii
AKSAKOV, S.	1
CHEHOV, A.	4
DOSTOIEVSKY, F.	10
EVREINOV, N.	33
GLINKA, F.	40
GOGOL, N.	42
GONCHAROV, I.	57
GRIBOYEDOV, A.	65
KARAMZIN, N.	69
KOSSATCH, L.	82
KRYLOV, I.	97
LERMONTOV, M.	111
NEKRASOV, N.	138
OSTROVSKI, A.	141
POBYEDONOSTSEV, K.	148
POLONSKI, I	154
PUSHKIN, A.	155, 281
SALTIKOV-SHEHEDRIN, M.	175

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Shevchenko, T. 186
Tiutchev, F. 200
Tolstoi, Alexis 201
Tolstoi, Leo 212
Turgeniev, I. 244
Von Vizin, D. 255
Volynsky, A. 266
Ballads and Folk Songs 272

INTRODUCTION

THE purpose of this anthology is to offer to English and American readers in an adequate translation examples of the best in Russian literature.

In compiling it, I have endeavoured to steer a course between several diverging currents. One method I have rejected is to set out a multitude of extracts in chronological order in the hope of illustrating by them the progress of Russian literature from its birth to its lusty prime. Such a compilation, however, is of real interest to no one but historians.

Another plan was to devote separate sections to Russian prose, Russian verse and Russian drama. These main divisions are then themselves divided and subdivided and subdivided again, and the beginnings, rise and triumph or decay of every branch and twig of the literature

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

are shown by copious examples. But to adopt such a method would lead to an anthology only for philologists.

A third and better plan, but one which I have still thought unsatisfactory, was to take the best authors and offer from their work the *most characteristic* passages. Without going into the question why such a task is well-nigh impossible—for, in the case of a many-sided writer, who is to judge what is most characteristic of him ?—I think it is enough to say that the result would be of very small interest to the general reader, for whom the present work is designed. To receive any real pleasure from such a collection of characteristic passages, a student would need to possess a large knowledge of Russian life and conditions. It would, in fact, be an anthology for sociologists.

As my object is the pleasure of the general reader, I have therefore set aside all these methods in favour of one which I think to be superior in interest and not less valuable. I have chosen not necessarily the most characteristic passages from the best Russian authors, but such characteristic passages as are at the

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

same time likely to interest the non-Russian. And I have endeavoured to extend the interest as far as possible by a varied and wide choice.

For all that, however, I should like to think that this book has a special significance among translations from the Russian. Russian literature is young, but it is already rich. Nor are we any longer ignorant of the extent of its wealth. Nearly every author in Russian literature worth translating has already been translated into English. In this book, for example, Volynsky alone is new to English readers. This means that there are no more Dostoievskys to be discovered. The old wood is felled; we must pass on. As a *compte rendu* of all that is best in Russian literature to 1917, this anthology is a touchstone by which all Russian books in future to be translated may be tested.

In transliterating Russian names I have not adopted any absolutely hard and fast rules, since English letters are often liable to be pronounced in more ways than one; but I have always chosen the simplest and most agreeable

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

renderings. Usually the Russian surnames have been accented only where they first appear, but in exceptional cases the accent has been retained throughout the extract.

C. E. BECHHOFER.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For kind permission to use their translations the Editor's thanks are due to Mr. L. A. Magnus, Col. J. Pollen, Mr. P. Selver, Mr. V. Tchertkoff, Miss S. Volska and Mr. F. Whishaw. Mr. Selver's and several of the Editor's own contributions are reprinted, by permission, from *The New Age*. He begs also to acknowledge the courtesy of the following firms for authorisation to include portions of copyright translations: Messrs. Henry Holt & Co. (Turgeniev's *Fathers and Sons*, translated by Dr. Schuyler); Messrs. Lothrop, Lee and Shepard (Tolstoi's *How Much Land a Man Needs*, translated by Mrs. Alice Delano); Messrs. Macmillan (Pushkin's *Eugene Onyeguine*, translated by Col. Spalding); Mr. Elkin Mathews (Pobyedonostsev's *Reflections of a Statesman*, translated by Mr. R. C. Long); and Messrs. Newnes (Pushkin's *Queen of Spades*, translated by Mrs. Sutherland Edwards).

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

S. AKSÁKOV

(1791–1859)

THE SERFS' WEDDING

In the fullness of his delight my grandfather suddenly thought of doing a kindness to Aksyúta, the serf-girl who made his tea and coffee, and whom—no one knew why—he was continually rewarding. Aksyúta was a little orphan peasant, taken into service at seven years old, simply because there was no one to look after her. She was very ugly to look at—red-haired, freckled, with eyes of unknown colour, and, besides, she was disgustingly squalid and evil-tempered. How could he like her? And yet my grandfather liked her very much, and not a dinner passed but he gave or sent out little scraps to his Aksyúta; when she grew into a girl, he made her pour him out tea in the mornings, and used to chat with her for hours at a time. At the present moment Aksyúta was well over thirty years old. And one morning my grandfather said to her, "Why are you in rags, you little fool? Go and dress yourself prettily in your holiday clothes; I want you to marry."

Aksyúta showed her teeth and, thinking that her master was joking, replied, "Who'll marry me, an

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

orphan? The shepherd Kirsánka, perhaps?" This was a well-known idiot and cripple.

My grandfather felt rather angry, and he continued, "If I suggest it, the best of our young men will be glad to marry you. Go and dress, and come back to me at once!"

In joyful perplexity Aksyúta went away, and my grandfather ordered Young Ivan to be sent for. He was a youth, twenty-four years of age, full-blooded, a fine fellow in every sense of the term, both in build and figure, the son of a zealous old servant who had died from worry and emaciation, as every one thought, in keeping order among the peasants he had been put in charge of. Ivan was called the "Young" because he had an elder brother, also named Ivan, who was nicknamed Parrot, like his father. Young Ivan flew up like the wind.

My grandfather looked at him with admiration and, in the kindest and gentlest of voices, whereat Ivan's blood began to freeze, he said, "Ivan, I want you to marry."

"It is your will, master," answered the serf, who was devoted to him in body and soul.

"Go and put on your best clothes, and come back to me as fast as you can."

Ivan ran off precipitately to carry out his master's order. Aksyúta returned first; she had smoothed and oiled her red hair with butter, had thrown on a holiday blouse and skirt, and put on her boots—and looked none the prettier! She could not control herself, and her mouth twisted unceasingly with a

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

joyful smile; she felt ashamed of this and covered her face with her hand. My grandfather laughed. "What, little one! You want a husband, eh?" said he.

Ivan flew up like a falcon, but he felt chilled to the bone at the sight of that dressed-up crow, Aksyúta.

"Here's a bride for you," said my grandfather merrily; "she serves me well, and your father served me well: I'll not abandon you." Then he spoke to his wife who had just come up. "Let a dowry be sewn for the bride from our own stores, and a cow given to her, and let the wedding be celebrated with our own beer, wine, and victuals."

There was no gainsaying him. The wedding was celebrated. Aksyúta fell over head and ears in love with her handsome husband, but Ivan began to hate his ugly wife, who was besides ten years older than he. Aksyúta was jealous from morning till night, and not without cause; and Ivan beat her from morning till night, also not without cause, for only the stick —and that not for long—could close her mouth and stop her angry tongue. It was a pity, a great pity, that my grandfather's joy became a source of others' sorrow.

[*From A FAMILY CHRONICLE, Part V. Translated by C. E. Bechhofer.*]

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

A. CHĒHOV

(1860–1904)

A WORK OF ART

HOLDING under his arm something wrapped in No. 223 of the *Bourse Gazette*, Sasha Smirnov, his mother's only son, entered Dr. Koshelkov's consulting-room with a wry expression on his face.

"Ah, my dear lad!" was the doctor's greeting. "Well, how do we feel? What good news have you to tell me?"

Sasha blinked his eyes, laid his hands upon his heart, and said with an agitated voice—

"Mother sends her best respects, Doctor, and asked me to thank you. I am my mother's only son, and you have saved my life—cured a dangerous illness, and neither of us knows how to thank you."

"That's all right, my lad!" interrupted the doctor complacently. "I only did what any one else would have done in my place."

"I am my mother's only son. We are poor folk and, of course, we cannot pay you for your trouble—and it puts us in a very awkward position, doctor, although, otherwise, mamma and I—my mother's only son, I beg you urgently to accept as a token of our gratitude,

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

this object which—a very precious object of antique bronze—a rare work of art."

"Quite unnecessary," replied the doctor, frowning "What for?"

"No, please, do not refuse it," Sasha continued to murmur, undoing the parcel. "You will offend myself and mamma if you refuse. A very expensive object. We got it from father when he died, and we keep it as a precious memory. My dad used to buy up antique bronzes and dispose of them to connoisseurs. Now mamma and I continue this business."

Sasha had unpacked the object and solemnly laid it on the table. It was a moderate-sized candelabra of old bronze, an artistic piece of work. It represented a group: on the pedestal stood two female figures in the costume of Eve and in a posture for the description of which I have neither sufficient boldness nor the appropriate temperament. The figures smiled archly, and generally had the appearance that made it seem as if, but for the duty of supporting the candlestick, they would leap down from the pedestal and perform in the room some action, which, dear reader, it is unbecoming even to think about.

Gazing at the gift, the doctor slowly rubbed his ear, cleared his throat, and blew his nose undecidedly.

"Yes, it's certainly a remarkably fine thing," he mumbled, "but, how shall I express it, not quite—too unconventional. It's not even *décolleté*, but Heaven knows what it is."

"Why, how do you mean?"

"The serpent of temptation himself could not have

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

devised anything worse. Why, to put such a fantastic thing on the table would mean soiling the whole dwelling!"

"What a curious notion you have of art, doctor!" said Sasha, putting on an injured tone. "Why, it's a wonderful thing—just have a good look at it. Such beauty and grace, that it fills the soul with a feeling of devotion, and a lump rises in the throat. At the sight of such beauty you forget all earthly things. Just look, what movement, what airiness and expression!"

"I understand all that perfectly well, my dear boy," interrupted the doctor, "but I am a family man, children run about in my room, and ladies come here."

"Of course, if you consider it from the standpoint of the masses," said Sasha, "then, of course, this highly artistic object appears in another light. But, doctor, raise yourself above the masses, all the more since by your refusal you will grieve myself and mamma. I am my mother's only son. You have saved my life. We give you the most precious of our objects and—and I am only sorry that we have not another candelabra to match it."

"Many thanks, my lad, I am very grateful. Remember me to your mamma, but hang it all, judge for yourself, children run about in my room, and ladies come here. Well, anyway, let it remain! There's no making it clear to you."

"There's nothing to make clear," said Sasha with joy. "Put the candelabra here, close to the vase. It's a pity that there isn't another to match—such a pity! Well, good-bye, doctor."

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

When Sasha had gone, the doctor gazed long on the candelabra, rubbed his ear and pondered.

"A splendid thing, there's no question about it," thought he, "and it would be a shame to throw it away. But it's impossible to keep it here. Hm! A hard nut to crack! I wonder whom I could give it to as a present, or where it would serve some charitable purpose?"

After long reflection he thought of his good friend Uchov, a barrister, to whom he was indebted for conducting a lawsuit.

"Excellent," decided the doctor, "for him as a friend it would be embarrassing to accept money, and it will be suitable if I present him with the object. I'll take the confounded thing to him. It's precious lucky that he's a bachelor and a bit of a rake."

Without any more ado the doctor put on his coat, took the candelabra, and made his way to Uchov.

"Good day, friend!" said he, finding the barrister at home. "I wanted to see you. I've come to thank you, old fellow, for your trouble. You won't take any money, but have this little trifle—look, my dear chap, a splendid little thing!"

On seeing the little trifle the barrister evinced indescribable delight.

"That's a fine thing if you like!" laughed he. "Why, 'pon my word, how the deuce do they think of such things! Wonderful! Splendid! Where did you get such a charming thing from?"

Having given vent to his rapture, the barrister cast an apprehensive look towards the door and said—

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

"But, my dear fellow, take back your present. I can't accept it."

"Why not?" said the doctor, alarmed.

"Why not? My mother comes to see me here, and there are clients. And besides, the presence of the servants embarrasses me."

"No, no, no. You mustn't refuse," said the doctor with a reproving wave of the hand. "It would be a shabby trick on your part. It's a fine work of art. Such movement—expression. Not another word. You'll offend me."

"If it were only coated over with something, or some fig leaves were hung on it."

But the doctor waved his hand the more, left Uchov's lodging with a bound and, content at having managed to get the present out of his hands, went home.

On his departure the barrister gazed upon the candelabra, fingered it from all sides, and, like the doctor, puzzled his head for a long time with the question: "What is to be done with the present?"

"It's a beautiful thing," was his verdict, "and it would be a shame to throw it away, but it wouldn't do to keep it here. The best thing to do would be to give it to somebody or other. That's it; I'll present it to the comedian Shashkin this very evening. The bounder likes things like that, and just this evening is his benefit."

No sooner said than done. In the evening the candelabra was carefully wrapped up and carried to the comedian Shashkin. The whole evening the comedian's dressing-room was simply raided by men who came to admire the present; the whole time the dressing-room

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

echoed with exclamations of delight and laughter like the neighing of horses. If any of the actresses came to the door and asked, "Can I come in?" immediately the comedian's hoarse voice was heard, "No, no, my dear, I'm not dressed!"

After the performance the comedian shrugged his shoulders, waved his hands, and said—

"Well, where am I to put the beastly thing? I live in a private lodging. Actresses come there. It's not a photograph that I can shove in a table-drawer."

"Why, dispose of it, sir," suggested the wig-maker, as he was undressing the comedian. "There's an old woman lives a little way out of the town who buys antique bronzes. Go there and ask for Mrs. Smirnov. They all know her."

The comedian did so. About two days later Doctor Koshelkov was sitting in his consulting-room, finger on brow, pondering on gallic acids. Suddenly the door was opened, and Sasha Smirnov sailed into the consulting-room. He smiled and beamed, and his whole face was radiant with joy. In his hands he held something wrapped up in a newspaper.

"Doctor!" he began, panting, "Just imagine my delight! Luckily for you we have managed to get hold of a match for your candelabra. Mamma's so pleased about it. I am my mother's only son. You have saved my life."

And Sasha, trembling with a feeling of gratitude, put down the candelabra in front of the doctor. The doctor opened his mouth, wanted to say something, but said nothing: his tongue was tied.

[*Translated by P. Selver.*]

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

F. DOSTOIÉVSKY

(1821–1881)

THE IDIOT FINDS NASTASIA

(*Nastasia, about to be married to Prince Míshkin, the epileptic "idiot," runs away from him at the church-door with his rival, Rogójin. The prince follows them to St. Petersburg.*)

An hour later the prince was in St. Petersburg, and by ten o'clock he had rung the bell at Rogójin's.

He had gone to the front door, and was kept waiting a long while before any one came. At last the door of the opposite flat (Rogójin's mother's) was opened and an aged servant appeared.

"Mr. Rogójin is not at home," she wheezed from out of the doorway; "whom do you want?"

"Mr. Rogójin."

"He is not in."

The old woman examined the prince from head to foot with great curiosity.

"At all events tell me whether he slept at home last night, and whether he came alone?"

The old woman continued to stare at him, but said nothing.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

"Was not Nastasia Philípovna here—at this house—with him, yesterday evening?"

"And, pray, who may you be?"

"Prince Míshkin; Mr. Rogójin knows me well."

"He is not at home."

"And Nastasia Philípovna?"

"I know nothing about her."

"Stop a minute; when will your master come back?"

"I don't know that either."

The door was shut with these words, and the old woman disappeared.

The prince decided to come back within an hour. Passing out of the house, he met the "dvornik" (yard-porter).

"Is Parfén Semiónovich at home?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Why did they tell me he was not at home, then?"

"Where did they tell you so—at his door?"

"No, at his mother's; I rang at his door and nobody came."

"Well, he may have gone out, I can't tell. Sometimes he takes the keys with him and leaves the house empty for two or three days."

"Do you know for certain that he was at home last night?"

"Yes, he was."

"Was Nastasia Philípovna with him?"

"I don't know; she doesn't often come; I think I should have known if she had come."

The prince went out deep in thought, and walked

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

up and down the pavement for some time. The windows of all the rooms occupied by Rogójin were shut up, those of his mother's apartment were open. It was a fine bright day. The prince crossed the road in order to have a good look up at the windows again; not only were Rogójin's all closed, but the white blinds were all down as well.

He stood so for a minute and then, suddenly, and with startling effect, a little corner of one of the blinds was lifted, and Rogójin's face appeared for an instant and disappeared at once. He waited another minute and decided to go and ring the bell once more; however, he thought better of it again and put it off for an hour.

The chief object in his mind at this moment was to get to the Ismailovsky barracks as quickly as he could, or rather to Nastasia's flat, which was near them. He remembered that not long since, when she had left Pavlovsk at his request, he had begged her to put up in town at the house of a respectable old lady who lived and let lodgings near the Ismailovsky barracks. Probably Nastasia had kept the rooms when she came down to Pavlovsk this last time—and most likely she would have spent the night there, Rogójin having taken her straight thither from the station.

The prince took a droshky. It struck him as he drove along that he ought to have commenced by coming here, since it was most improbable that Rogójin should have taken Nastasia to his own house last night. He remembered too that the dvornik said she very rarely went there; this made it still less likely that she should have been there so late at night.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Supporting himself with these reflections, the prince reached the Ismailovsky barracks in a dazed condition.

To his absolute consternation the good people of the house had not only heard nothing of Nastasia, but all came out to look at the prince as if he were a marvel of some sort. The whole family came: mother, daughter, and grandmother—and the prince was begged to enter. He guessed at once that they knew perfectly well who he was, and that yesterday ought to have been his wedding day; and further that they were dying to ask all about the interrupted wedding, and especially about the mystery as to why he should be here now, inquiring for the woman who in all reasonable human probability might have been expected to be with him in Pavlovsk.

He satisfied their curiosity, in as few words as possible, with regard to the wedding.

The exclamations, and sighs, and "oh's" were so numerous and sincere that the prince was obliged to tell the whole story—in a short form, of course. The advice of all these agitated ladies was that the prince should go at once and knock at Rogójin's until he was let in: and when let in insist upon a substantial explanation of everything.

If Rogójin was really not at home, the prince was advised to go to a certain house, the address of which was given, where lived an old friend of Nastasia's; it was possible that she might have spent the night there in her anxiety to keep out of the way of all her acquaintances.

The prince rose from his seat in a condition of mental

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

collapse. The good ladies reported afterwards that "his pallor was terrible to see, and his legs seemed to give way underneath him." With difficulty he was made to understand that his new friends would be glad o his address, in order to act with him if possible. After a moment's thought he gave the address of the small hotel on the stairs of which he had had an epileptic fit some five weeks since. He then set off once more for Rogójin's.

This time they opened the door neither at Rogójin's lodging nor at the opposite flat. The prince found the dvornik with the greatest difficulty, and when found the man would hardly look at him or answer his questions, pretending to be busy over some work. Eventually, however, he was persuaded to reply so far as to s ate that Rogójin had left the house early in the morning and gone to Pavlovsk, and that he would not return to-day at all.

"I shall wait, however; he may decide to come back."

"He may not be home for a week."

"Then, at all events, he *did* sleep here, did he?"

"Well—he did sleep here, yes."

A' this was suspicious and unsatisfactory. Very likely the dvornik had received new instructions during the interval of the prince's absence; his manner was so different now—he had been so obliging—now he was as obstinate and silent as a mule. However, the prince decided to call again in a couple of hours, and after that, if necessary, to watch the house. His hope was now that he might yet find Nastasia at the address

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

which he had just received from the old ladies. To that address he now set off, full speed.

But alas! at this new place they did not even appear to understand what he was driving at. After a while, by dint of certain hints, he was able to gather that Nastasia must have had a quarrel with her friend two or three weeks ago, since which date the latter had neither heard nor seen anything of her. In fact, this good friend of Nastasia's gave him to understand that the subject of the latter's present whereabouts was not of the slightest interest to her; and that Nastasia might marry all the princes in the world for all *she* cared! The prince took his leave hurriedly. It struck him now that she might have gone away to Moscow just as she had done the last time, and that Rogójin had perhaps gone after her, perhaps even *with* her. If only he could find some clue to her movements!

However, he must take his room at the hotel; and he started off in that direction. Having engaged his room, he was asked by the waiter whether he would take dinner; replying in the affirmative, he sat down and waited; but it was not long before it occurred to him that dining would delay him. Disturbed by this idea he started up, crossed the dark passage (which filled him with horrible impressions and gloomy forebodings), and set out once more for Rogójin's. Rogójin had not returned, and no one came to the door. He rang at the old lady's door opposite, and was informed that Rogójin would not return for three days. The curiosity with which the old servant stared at him again impressed the prince dis-

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

agreeably. He could not find the dvornik this time at all.

As before, he crossed the street and watched the windows from the other side, walking up and down in mental anguish for half an hour or so. Nothing stirred, the blinds were motionless; indeed, the prince began to think that the former apparition of Rogójin's face must have been mere fancy. Soothed with this thought the prince drove off once more to his old friends at the Ismailovsky barracks. He was expected there. The mother had already been to three or four places to look for Nastasia, but had not found a trace of any kind.

The prince said nothing, but entered the room, sat down silently, and stared at them, one after the other, with the air of a man who cannot make head or tail of what is being said to him. It was strange—at one moment he seemed to be so observant, the next so absent; his behaviour struck the old ladies as most remarkable. At length he rose from his seat and begged to be shown Nastasia's rooms. The ladies reported afterwards how that he had examined everything in the apartments; that he had observed an open book on the table, and had requested permission of the lady of the house to take it with him. He had turned down the leaf at the open place and pocketed the book before the old lady could explain that it was a library book. He had then seated himself at the open window. Seeing a card-table, he asked who played cards.

He was informed that Nastasia used to play with

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Rogójin every evening, either at "preference" or "little fool," or "whist"; that this had been their practice since her last arrival from Pavlovsk; that she had taken to this amusement because she did not like to see Rogójin sitting silent and dull for whole evenings at a time; that the day after Nastasia had made a remark to the above effect, Rogójin had whipped a pack of cards out of his pocket. Nastasia had laughed, but soon took to playing. The prince asked where were the cards, but was told that Rogójin used to bring a new pack every day, and always carried away the old ones in his pocket.

The good ladies recommended the prince to try knocking at Rogójin's once more—not at once, but in the evening. Meanwhile, the mother would go to Pavlovsk to inquire whether anything had been heard of Nastasia there; the prince was to come back at ten o'clock and meet her, to hear her news and arrange plans for the morrow.

In spite of the kindly-meant consolations of his new friends, the prince walked to his hotel in inexpressible anguish of spirit, through the hot, dusty streets of the capital, so unsavoury in summer time. Arrived at his destination, he determined to rest awhile in his room before he started off for Rogójin's once more. He sat down, rested his elbows on the table and his head on his hands, and fell to thinking.

Heaven knows how long and upon what subject he mused. He thought of many things—of Rogójin himself, first as at the funeral, then as he had met him in the park, then suddenly, as they had met in this very

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

passage, outside here, when Rogójin had watched in the darkness and awaited his passing with uplifted knife. The prince remembered his enemy's eyes as they had glared at him then, in the darkness. He shuddered as a sudden idea occurred to him.

This was, that if Rogójin were in St. Petersburg, though he might hide for a time, yet he was quite sure to come to him—the prince—before long, with either good or evil intentions, but probably with the same intention as on that other occasion. At all events, if Rogójin were to come at all he would be sure to seek the prince here, he had no other town address—perhaps in this same corridor; Rogójin might well seek him here if he needed him, yes, *if he needed him.* And who knows, perhaps he did need him, *now*; it was a dreadful thought. He would not come if all were well with him, that was part of the thought; he would come if all were not well; and undoubtedly all could *not* be well with him now; yes, it was a dreadful thought. The prince could not bear this new idea; he took his hat and rushed out towards the street. It was almost pitch dark in the passage.

"What if he were to come out of that corner as I go by and—and stop me?" thought the prince, as he approached the familiar spot. But no one appeared.

He passed under the gateway and issued into the street; the crowds of people walking about—a favourite occupation at sunset in St. Petersburg during the summer—annoyed him, but he walked on towards Rogójin's street.

About fifty yards from the hotel, at the first cross

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

road, as he passed through the crowd of foot passengers sauntering along, some one touched his shoulder, and said in a half whisper into his very ear—

"My friend, come along with me this way." It was Rogójin.

How strange it was; the prince immediately began to tell him eagerly and joyfully how he had but the moment before expected to see him in the dark passage of the hotel.

"I *was* there," said Rogójin unexpectedly. "Come along."

The prince was surprised at this answer; but his astonishment only commenced a couple of minutes afterwards, when he began to consider it. Having thought over the reply, he became frightened and glanced at Rogójin in alarm. The latter was striding along a yard or so ahead, looking straight in front of him, and mechanically allowing any one he might meet to pass.

"Why did you not inquire for me in my room if you were in the hotel?" asked the prince suddenly.

Rogójin stopped and looked at him, then reflected and replied as though he had not heard the question—

"Look here, you go on straight to the house, my house; I shall walk on the other side. See that we go along together at the same pace."

So saying, Rogójin crossed the road.

Arrived at the opposite pavement, he looked back to see whether the prince was moving on, and strode along, looking across every moment to see whether the prince understood his instructions. The prince

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

supposed that Rogójin desired to look out for some one on the way whom he was afraid to miss; but if so, why had he not told *him* whom to look out for? So the two proceeded for half a mile or so. Suddenly the prince began to tremble from some unknown cause. He could not bear it, and signalled to Rogójin across the road.

The latter came at once.

"Is Nastasia at your house?"

"Yes."

"And was it you looked out of the window under the blind this morning?"

"Yes."

"Then why did——"

But the prince could not finish his question; he did not know what to say. Moreover, his heart was beating so that he found it difficult to speak at all. Rogójin was silent also and looked at him as before, with an expression of thoughtfulness.

"Well, I'm going," he said at last, preparing to recross the road; "you go along here as before; we will keep to different sides of the road; it's better so, you'll see——"

When they came near the house, the prince's legs were so feeble and trembling that he could hardly walk. It was about ten o'clock. The old lady's windows were open, as before; Rogójin's were all shut, and in the darkness the white blinds stood out whiter than ever. Rogójin and the prince each approached the house on his respective side of the road; Rogójin, who was on the near side, beckoned the prince across. The prince went over to the doorway.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

"Even the dvornik does not know that I have come home now. I told him, and told them at my mother's too, that I was off to Pavlovsk," said Rogójin, with a cunning, self-satisfied leer. "We'll go in quietly and nobody will hear us."

He had the key in his hand. Mounting the staircase he turned and signalled the prince to go more softly; he opened the door very quietly, let the prince in, followed him, locked the door behind him, and put the key in his pocket.

"Come along," he whispered.

He had spoken in a whisper all the way. In spite of his obviously assumed composure, he was evidently in a state of great mental agitation. Arrived in a large room, next to the study, he went to the window and cautiously beckoned the prince up to him—

"When you rang the bell this morning I thought it must be you; I went to the door on tip-toe and heard you talking to the old servant opposite. I had told her before that if any one came and rang—especially yourself, and I gave her your name—she was not to let on about me. Then I thought, what if he goes and stands opposite and looks up, or waits about to watch the house? So I came to this very window, looked out, and there you were, looking straight at me. That's how it all came about."

"Where is Nastas'a?" asked the prince, panting.

"She's here," replied Rogójin slow'y and after a slight pause.

"Where?"

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Rogójin raised his eyes to the prince and gazed intently at him.

"Come," he said.

He continued to speak in a whisper, and very deliberately as before; and strangely thoughtful and grave he looked. Even while he told the story of how he had peeped through the blind he gave the impression of having intended to say something else. They entered the study. In this room some changes had taken place since the prince was last there. The whole chamber was divided into two equal parts by a large silk curtain stretched across it, with divisions at either end for ingress and egress; in the farther half was placed Rogójin's bed.

The heavy curtain was drawn now, and the side entrances closed up. It was very dark. The bright Petersburg summer nights were already beginning to close in; so that, excepting by moonlight, it would have been difficult to distinguish anything in Rogójin's dismal house at night-time, with the blinds down. One could just distinguish faces, however, though not in detail. Rogójin's face was white, as usual. His eyes glared steadfastly at the prince, lustrous and glowing, but with marvellous immobility.

"Had you not better light a candle?" said the prince.

"There is no need," replied Rogójin, and taking the other by the hand he seated him in a chair; he himself took a chair opposite and drew it up so close that he almost pressed against the prince's knees. At their side was a little round table.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

"Sit down," said Rogójin; "let us rest a bit." There was silence for a moment.

"I knew you would be at that hotel," he continued, just as men sometimes commence a serious conversation by discussing a trivial subject for a moment or two before leading up to the main point. "As I entered the passage it struck me that perhaps you were sitting and waiting for me, just as I had been waiting for you to come to me. Have you been at the old lady's at Ismailovsky barracks?"

"Yes," said the prince, squeezing the word out with difficulty owing to the dreadful beating of his heart.

"I thought you would. 'They'll talk too much,' I thought; so I determined to go and fetch you to spend the night here—'we shall all be together then,' I thought, 'for this one night——'"

"Rogójin, *where* is Nastasia?" said the prince, suddenly rising from his seat. He was quaking in all his limbs, and his words came in a scarcely audible whisper. Rogójin rose also.

"Behind there," he whispered, nodding his head towards the curtain.

"Asleep?" whispered the prince.

Rogójin looked intently at him again, as before.

"Let's go in—but you mustn't——well—let's go in."

He lifted the curtain, paused, and turned to the prince—

"Go in," he said, motioning him to pass behind the curtain. The prince went in.

"It's so dark," he said.

"You can see quite enough," muttered Rogójin.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

"I can just see there's a bed——"

"Go nearer," suggested Rogójin.

The prince took a step forward—then another—and paused. He stood and stared before him for a minute or two. Neither of the men spoke a word while at the bedside. The prince's heart beat so loud that its knocking seemed to be distinctly audible in the deathly silence of the chamber.

But now his eyes had become so far accustomed to the darkness that he could distinguish the whole of the bed. Some one was asleep upon it—sleeping an absolutely motionless sleep. Not the slightest movement was perceptible, not the faintest of breathing was distinguishable. The sleeper was covered from the head down with a white sheet; yet the outline of the limbs was—somehow—hardly distinguishable underneath. The gazer could just make out, by the elevation of the sheet, that a human being lay outstretched beneath it.

All around, on the bed, on a chair beside it, on the floor, were scattered the different portions of a magnificent white silk dress, bits of lace, and rich ribbon. On a small table at the pillow glittered a mass of diamonds, torn off and thrown down anyhow. From under a heap of lace at the end of the bed peeped one small white foot, which looked as though it had been chiselled out of marble; terribly, dreadfully still and white it seemed.

The prince gazed and gazed, and felt that the more he gazed the more deadly became the silence. Suddenly a fly awoke somewhere and buzzed across the

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

room, hovered over the bed, and settled in silence on the pillow. The prince shuddered.

"Let's go out," said Rogójin, touching his shoulder. They left the bedchamber and sat down in the two chairs they had occupied before—opposite one another. The prince trembled more and more violently, and never took his questioning look off Rogójin's face.

"I see you are shuddering, Míshkin," said the latter, at length; "almost as you did once in Moscow, or at that other time just before your fit, don't you remember? I don't know yet what I shall do with you——"

The prince bent forward to listen, putting all the strain he could muster upon his understanding in order to take in what Rogójin said, and continuing to gaze questioningly at the latter's face.

"Is that—your doing?" he muttered at last, motioning with his head towards the curtain.

"Yes, mine," whispered Rogójin, and sank into silence.

Neither man spoke for five minutes.

"Because, you know," Rogójin recommenced, as though continuing a former sentence, "if you were ill now, or had a fit, or screamed or anything, they might hear it in the yard, or even in the street, and guess that some one was passing the night in the house: then people would come and knock and want to come in because they know I am not supposed to be at home. I didn't light a candle for the same reason. When I am not here—for two or three days at a time, now and then—no one comes in to tidy the house or anything;

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

those are my orders. So that I do not want them to know we are spending the night here——"

"Wait," interrupted the prince, "I asked both the dvornik and the old woman whether Nastasia had spent last night in the house; so they knew——"

"I know you asked. I told them that she had called in for ten minutes, and then gone straight back to Pavlovsk. No one knows she slept here. Last night we came in just as carefully as you and I did to-day. I thought as I came along with her that she would not like being asked to creep in so carefully; I was quite wrong. She whispered, and walked on tip-toe—she tore her skirt half off, and carried it over her arm, so that it shouldn't rustle, and she held up her finger at me on the stairs, so that I shouldn't make a noise—it was *you* she was afraid of. She was half mad with terror in the train, and she herself begged me to bring her to this house. I thought of taking her to the old lady at Ismailovsky barracks first; but she wouldn't hear of it. She said, 'No—not there; he'll find me out at once there. Take me to your own house, where you can hide me, and to-morrow early send me off to Moscow." Then she would go to Orel, she said. When she went to bed, she was still talking about going to Orel."

"Wait. What do you intend to do now, Rogójin?"

"Well, I'm afraid of you, you see; you shudder and tremble so. We'll pass the night here together. There are no other beds here besides that one; but I've thought how we'll manage. I'll take all the cushions off all the sofas, and lay them down on the floor, up against the curtain here—enough both for you and for

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

me—so that we shall all be together, and close to one another. For if they come in and look about now, you know, they'll find her, and carry her away, and they'll be asking me questions, and I shall say I did it, and then they'll carry me away, too, don't you see? So let her lie close to us—close to you and me."

"Yes, yes," assented the prince, with conviction.

"Then we are agreed not to say anything about it, and not to let them carry her away from us?"

"Not for anything!" cried the other; "no, no, no!"

"So I had already decided, my friend, not to give her up to any one to-night," continued Rogójin. "We'll be very quiet. I have only been out of the house one hour all day; all the rest of the time I have been by her. I dare say the air is very bad here. Do you find it bad?"

"I don't know—perhaps—by morning it will be."

"I've covered her with oilcloth—best American oilcloth, and put the sheet over that, and she's lying so still; you shall see in the morning when it's light. What! can't you get up?" asked Rogójin, seeing the other was trembling so that he could not rise from his seat.

"My legs won't move," said the prince; "it's horror, I know. When my dread is over, the shuddering will pass, and I'll get up——"

"Wait a bit—I'll make the beds, and then you can lie down. I'll lie down, too, and we'll listen and watch, for I don't know yet what I shall do with you. I tell you beforehand, so that you may be prepared in case I——"

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Muttering these disconnected words, Rogójin began to make the beds. It was clear that he had devised these beds beforehand; last night he slept on the sofa. But there was no room for two on the sofa, and he seemed anxious that he and the prince should be close to one another; therefore, he now dragged cushions of all sizes and shapes from the sofa and chairs, and made a sort of bed of them up against the curtain. He then approached the prince, and courteously gave him a hand, helping him to lie down on this novel bed. But it turned out that the prince could now rise and move from his seat by himself, so that his dread must have passed; for all that, however, he continued to shudder.

"It's hot weather, you see," continued Rogójin, "and, naturally, the air will be close and bad here. I daren't open the window; my mother has some beautiful flowers in pots; they have a delicious scent; I thought of fetching them in, but that old servant would find out, she's very inquisitive——"

"Yes, she is inquisitive," assented the prince.

"I thought of buying flowers, and putting them all round her, but I was sorry, somehow——"

"Look here," said the prince; he was bewildered, and his brain wandered; he seemed to be continually groping for the questions he wished to ask, and immediately losing touch of them when framed. "Listen—tell me—how did you—with a knife?—that same one?"

"Yes, that same one."

"Wait a minute, I want to ask you something else,

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Rogójin, all sorts of things, but tell me first, did you intend to kill her before my wedding, at the church door, with your knife ? "

" I don't know whether I did or not," said Rogójin dreamily ; he seemed to be a little astonished with the question, or he did not quite take it in.

" Did you take your knife to Pavlovsk with you ? "

" No. As to the knife," he added, " this is all I can tell you about it " ; he was silent for a moment, and then added, " I took it out of the locked drawer this morning about three, for it was in the morning all—this—happened. It has been inside the book ever since—and—and this is what is such a marvel to me, the knife only went in an inch, or a couple of inches at most, just under her left breast, and there wasn't more than half a tablespoonful of blood altogether, really not more."

" Yes—yes—yes——" The prince jumped up in extraordinary agitation, " I know, I know, I've read of that sort of thing—it's hæmorrhage, you know ; sometimes there isn't a drop—if the blow is straight to the heart——"

" Wait—listen ! " cried Rogójin suddenly, starting up. " Some one's walking about, do you hear ? in the hall." Both sat up to listen.

" I hear," said the prince, whispering.

" Are they moving ? "

" Yes."

" Shall I shut the door, and lock it, or not ? "

" Yes, lock it."

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

He locked the door, and both lay down again. There was a long silence.

"Yes, by the by," whispered the prince, hurriedly and excitedly as before, as though he had just seized hold of an idea and was afraid of losing it again, "I—I wanted those cards. They say you played cards with her?"

"Yes, I played with her," said Rogójin, after a short silence.

"Where are the cards?"

"Here they are," said Rogójin, after a still longer pause. "Here——"

He produced a pack of cards, wrapped in a bit of paper, from his pocket, and handed them across to the prince. The latter took them, but with a sort of perplexity. A new, sad, helpless feeling had taken hold of his heart; he had suddenly realised that all this while he had not been talking about what he wished to discuss, neither had he acted as he had intended and that these cards which he held in his hand, and which he had been so delighted to grasp at the first moment, were really of no use—no use. He rose, and wrung his hands. Rogójin lay motionless, and seemed neither to hear nor see his movements; but his eyes blazed in the darkness, and were fixed and steadfast in their wild gaze in front of him.

The prince sat down on a chair, and began to watch him in alarm. Half an hour went by.

Suddenly Rogójin burst into a loud, abrupt laugh, as though he had quite forgotten that he ought to whisper.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

"That officer, eh!—that young officer—don't you remember the fellow at the music, eh? Ha, ha, ha! Didn't she whip him smartly, eh?"

The prince jumped up from his seat in renewed terror. When Rogójin quieted down (which he did at once) the prince bent over him; he sat down beside him, and with painfully beating heart and still more painful breath, began to watch his face anxiously. Rogójin never turned his head; he seemed to have forgotten all about him. The prince gazed on and waited. The hours passed—it began to grow light.

Rogójin commenced to wander, muttering disconnectedly; then he took to shouting and laughing. The prince stretched out his trembling hand and gently stroked his hair and his cheeks—he could do nothing more. His legs trembled and he felt no support in them. And now a novel sensation came over him, filling his heart and soul with ineffable anguish.

Meanwhile the daylight grew full and strong; and at last the prince lay down, quite helpless, full of despair; he laid his cheek against the white motionless cheek of Rogójin; his tears trickled down into Rogójin's face, but Rogójin was unaware of it. And when, after many hours, the door was opened and people thronged in, they found the murderer perfectly demented and in a state of raging fever. The prince was sitting by him motionless, and, each time that the sick man gave a cry, or a laugh, or a shout, hastened to pass his own trembling hand over his companion's hair and cheeks, as though trying to soothe and quiet him But it was obvious that he understood nothing of what

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

was said to him, and recognized none of those who crowded in and surrounded him.

If Dr. Schneider himself had arrived from Switzerland and looked at his former pupil and patient,—even he—remembering the poor prince's condition during the first year of his treatment in Switzerland,—even Schneider would have wrung his hands and cried out as he did then : " an idiot—a poor idiot ! "

[*THE IDIOT, Part IV, ch.* 11.
Translated by F. Whishaw.]

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

N. EVRÉINOV

(Born 1879)

HARLEQUIN AT HOME

HARLEQUIN : Help me to lay the table for supper.
PIERROT (*going to the cupboard*) : With great pleasure.
HARLEQUIN : We must lay for three.
PIERROT : Three ?
HARLEQUIN : Yes.
PIERROT : Whom's the third for ?
HARLEQUIN : For Death.
PIERROT : She'll sit down with us ?
HARLEQUIN : If you're not afraid of her.
PIERROT : Two glasses are enough ; I won't have supper with you.
HARLEQUIN : Come, come ! I was joking. Death will sup on me. That's sufficient for her. But, all the same, lay for three. (*Lights the lamp.*)
PIERROT : But whom's the third for ?
COLUMBINE'S voice (*sings*) :

I from my husband unsuspected
Steal to another 'neath the moon :
When desire's interdicted,
Doubly 'tis desired soon.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Ah, my heart is trembling,
Fainting, beating slow—
If my spouse should see me,
Should hearken, and should know.

PIERROT: What's that? Columbine's voice! My wife's voice!

HARLEQUIN: Now you know whom the third place is for.

PIERROT (*tragically*): A-ah! Traitor! A-ah! Demon! This is your friendship!

HARLEQUIN: Be calm. Why, nothing's happened yet!

PIERROT: It only wants that!

HARLEQUIN: And if I were to say that it doesn't even want that?

PIERROT: And you dare pretend that you love me!

HARLEQUIN: I love you both. But you want it to be only you, and so you're jealous.

PIERROT: You know very well how, of whom, and why I'm jealous.

HARLEQUIN: Be sensible. If you love me and love Columbine, you ought to be happy for both our sakes. Besides, you know we both love you. So what is there to be sad about? Lay a third place.

PIERROT: No, I'm not so simple. Nice people don't behave like that, and there's nothing else left for me than to revenge myself on you.

HARLEQUIN: In what way?

PIERROT: By death.

HARLEQUIN: But it'll come soon, anyhow—my

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

hours are numbered. Who will prevent you afterwards from telling everybody that it was the work of your hands?

PIERROT: Suppose——

HARLEQUIN: Come, what is there to talk about! Lay a third place.

PIERROT (*considering*): Yes, but——

HARLEQUIN: Come, come. Time's precious. PIERROT *fetches the plates and drops them.*) Butterfingers! You were bound to smash 'em.

PIERROT (*pathetically*): It's not for you to reproach me! You've destroyed my happiness.

HARLEQUIN (*laying the third place*): No phrases, please! You've been cold with Columbine for a long time, and you're only jealous because it's good manners. But, shh!

COLUMBINE'S voice:

Columbine has donned her mask
And is clad in motley gear, O,
Wants to see her Harlequin,
But's afraid of meeting Pierrot.
Ah, her heart is trembling,
Fainting, beating slow—
If her spouse should see her,
Should hearken, and should know.

HARLEQUIN: I'm going to meet Columbine; you look after the lamp. (*Exit.*)

PIERROT: H'm. Look after the lamp! (*Suddenly strikes his forehead.*) Wouldn't it be better to look after the clock? Well, if Harlequin's death

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

ought to be the work of my hands, very well! He's doomed, anyhow, to die at midnight. Ladies and gentlemen, you are my witnesses! I don't leave that sort of things unpunished—I'll put the hands on two hours. (*Does so.*) Ah! Harlequin, evidently no one can escape his fate. Now I'm quite calm: I'm revenged. Interesting to see how she'll look at me. This way, please, Madame Traitress.

HARLEQUIN (*off*): Don't be afraid, Columbine. Go in fearlessly. I've persuaded him, and, word of honour, he's consented.

COLUMBINE (*enters*): Consented? Here's a fine thing! Consented! What, you little beast, that's all you think of your wife! You don't care if she betrays you? You don't care? Answer! (*Beats* PIERROT.)

PIERROT (*agonised*): But listen, Columbine.

COLUMBINE: What? I must listen to you? Listen to the worst little beast of a husband of all little beasts of husbands?——

PIERROT: But, Columbine.

COLUMBINE: Blockhead!

PIERROT: You don't let me utter a word.

COLUMBINE (*beats him*): You've got no excuse. And I, poor thing, married a little beast like you. Gave you all the best there was in me! And he can't even stand up for my conjugal honour! Take that, and that, and that, you good-for-nothing!

PIERROT: But that's too much! Harlequin, protect me.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

HARLEQUIN : This is your own business.

PIERROT : Yes, but, dear old chap——

HARLEQUIN : I haven't been brought up to interfere in other people's private matters.

COLUMBINE (*to* PIERROT) : There, that's how you love me ! That's how jealous you are of me ! Where are your vows, you pagan ?

PIERROT (*coming to himself*) : Oh, to Hell with this, I never heard of such a thing ! Why, you impudent woman, you came here yourself to a rendezvous and yet you dare say——

COLUMBINE : That's enough ! Be quiet ! I know the little ways of rogues like you : when you're found out you start to find fault with the innocent, so as to get out of the difficulty. But you don't deceive me, you good-for-nothing.

HARLEQUIN (*interposing*) : Friends, don't let's waste precious time ! When supper's waiting, is it worth while spoiling one's appetite ?

COLUMBINE and PIERROT : But it *is* irritating !

HARLEQUIN : I don't like to see quarrels starting.

COLUMBINE and PIERROT : It's not my fault.

HARLEQUIN : Better make friends !

COLUMBINE and PIERROT : Not for anything.

HARLEQUIN : What obstinacy !

COLUMBINE and PIERROT : I've been wounded in my finest feelings.

HARLEQUIN : Come, enough.

COLUMBINE and PIERROT : No.

COLUMBINE : First he ought to be punished.

HARLEQUIN : In what way ?

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

COLUMBINE: Kiss me, Harlequin! Dear, sweet Harlequin.

HARLEQUIN: Not to offend you with a refusal—(*kisses her*). I was always an obliging cavalier. (*Kisses her.*) Besides that, I've got a tender heart. (*Kisses her.*) Even children know it. (*Kisses her.*) And finally, as host—(*kisses her*)—I ought to be polite to my guests—(*kisses her*)—especially when it concerns—(*kisses her*)—the fair sex. (*Kisses her.*)

PIERROT: Wretches! They don't suspect that I'm already revenged and so can be absolutely calm.

COLUMBINE (*to* HARLEQUIN): Kiss me more warmly, more strongly, more painfully, almost biting me, without losing breath. (*Is kissed as she desires.*)

PIERROT: They imagine they're mortally provoking me.

COLUMBINE (*to* HARLEQUIN): Once more! Once more! (*To* PIERROT.) Oh! you unfeeling log!

PIERROT: Please do what you like. (*To Audience.*) My conscience is clean; I have vindicated my honour and have nothing to worry about.

COLUMBINE (*to* HARLEQUIN): Kiss my eyes, my forehead, my cheeks, my chin, my temples. (HARLEQUIN *does not want to be asked a second time.*)

PIERROT (*to Audience*): Gentlemen, you are witnesses that I've taken my revenge.

COLUMBINE (*to* HARLEQUIN): Kiss my neck where the hair ends and whe e a sweet shivering comes from your kisses.

PIERROT: I don't care. Let them do as they want.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

I have fulfilled the duty of an affronted husband and never felt better in my life.

COLUMBINE (*stamping at* PIERROT): There, you brute! Is all this nothing to you?

PIERROT (*to Audience*): I'm wearing them out with my nonchalance.

[*From A MERRY DEATH. Translated by C. E. Bechhofer.*]

F. GLINKA

(1786—1880)

MOSCOW

Wondrous city, ancient city,
  Thou enfoldest in thy walls
Villages and smiling suburbs,
  Churches, palaces, and halls.

Thou art girt by grassy meadows,
  Gay with gardens, rich in flowers;
Seven the hills are which thou crownest
  With thy temples, with thy towers.

. . . . . .

Capture Moscow's mighty Krem! ?
  Who on earth wou'd boast the power?
Who could rob the golden bonnet
  From the slender Ivan tower?

Who could ever swing the Tsar-bell,
  Or the Tsar-gun overthrow?
Reverence at the sacred gateway
  Who could ever fail to show?

. . . . . .

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Once a captive and dishonoured,
In thine embers thou didst lie!
Now arisen from thine ashes
Changeless, lift thy head on high!

Flourish through the countless ages,
Moscow, many-towered town!
Thou, the midmost heart of Russia,
Russia's glory, Russia's crown!

[*Translated by N. H. Dole*].

N. GÓGOL

(1809—1852)

I

OLD-WORLD GENTLEFOLK

To this day I cannot forget two old people in the past who now, alas! are no more. Yet my heart is full of sorrow and my feelings are curiously strained when I imagine myself coming again to the place, now deserted, where they lived, and seeing again the cluster of tumble-down huts, the stagnant pond, an overgrown pit on the spot where the little low house stood—and nothing more. Sad, ah! I feel sad already. But let us return to our tale.

Athanasius Ivánovich and his wife Pulcheria Ivanovna were the old people of whom I began to tell. If I were a painter and wished to represent on canvas Philemon and Baucis, I should never choose any other originals but them. Athanasius was sixty years old, Pulcheria fifty-five. Athanasius was of tall stature, always went about in a sheepskin covered with cloth, stooped when he sat, and was almost always smiling, whether talking or just listening. Pulcheria was rather serious and hardly ever smiled, but in her face and her eyes were written so much kindness and

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

so much readiness to offer you all the best they owned that you would really have found a smile excessively sweet upon her kind face. Faint wrinkles were distributed over their faces with such charm that a painter would certainly have stolen them. In them one seemed to be able to read the old couple's whole clear, calm life. And it was impossible to look at the old people without sharing in their mutual love.

The rooms of their little house were small and low —the sort that are usually met with among old-world gentlefolk. In each room was an enormous stove, occupying almost a third of it. The little rooms were terribly hot, because both Athanasius and Pulcheria were very fond of warmth. The backs of the stoves all opened into the hall and were filled almost to the ceiling with straw, which is generally used in Little Russia instead of wood. The crackling and the light of this burning straw made the hall extraordinarily pleasant on a winter's evening. The walls of the rooms were decorated with a few pictures, large and small, in old-fashioned narrow frames. Round the windows and over the doors there was a quantity of little pictures. The floor in nearly all the rooms was of clay, but spread so cleanly and kept with such tidiness as, indeed, no parquet is in a mansion, lazily swept by a yawning gentleman in livery. Pulcheria's room was full of trunks, chests, and smaller chests and smaller trunks. A quantity of bags and sacks with the seeds of flowers, vegetables and melons hung on the walls. Bundles of differently coloured wool, and shreds of old-fashioned clothes sewn half a century before, were packed in

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

the corners of the trunks and between the trunks. Pulcheria was a great housewife and collected everything, although sometimes she herself did not know whether it would ever be of use.

But the most remarkable thing in the house was the singing of the doors. As soon as ever morning came, the singing of doors resounded throughout the whole house. I cannot say for what reason they sang: whether the rusty hinges were to blame, or the carpenter in making them had concealed in them a device of some sort; but what was remarkable was that each door had its own voice: the bedroom door sang with the thinnest of trebles, the dining-room door was a hoarse bass, but the door in the hall gave out a sort of strange, cracked, and at the same time groaning sound, so that, listening to it, one heard very plainly: "Deary me, I'm freezing!"

I know that many people do not like this sound, but I like it very well, and if I sometimes chance to catch the creak of doors here, I immediately imagine the country about me: the low room, the lighted candle in the old-fashioned candlestick; the supper on the table; the dark May night looking from out the garden through the wide-open window on to the ready-laid table; the nightingale that fills garden, house, and the distant river with its trills; the horror and rustle of the branches—heavens, what a long series of memories drifts upon me! The chairs in the room were wooden and massive, as is usual in the old fashions; they all had high, carved backs, without any varnish or paint: they were not even

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

covered, and resembled somewhat the chairs whereon our archbishops sit to this day.

There were little triangular tables in the corners, and little square tables in front of the sofa, and the mirrors with their thin gilt frames carved into leaves, which the flies had covered with black spots; in front of the sofa, too, was a carpet with birds that looked like flowers, and flowers that looked like birds.

. . . . . .

Athanasius busied himself very little with his affairs, although, truth to tell, he did drive up sometimes to the mowers and reapers and look fairly attentively at their work; the management rested the entire time on Pulcheria. Her housewifery consisted in an endless opening and closing of store-rooms, in salting, drying and boiling an incalculable quantity of fruits and vegetables. Her house was quite like a chemical laboratory. Under an apple-tree a fire was perpetually lit, and there was almost always standing on the iron tripod a saucepan or a copper basin with jam, jelly, or sweetmeats, made with honey, or with sugar, or with I don't remember what else. Under another tree her coachman used to distil vodka in a copper alembic with peach leaves, wild-cherry flowers, sunflowers, cherry-stones, and at the end of the process would be absolutely incapable of moving his tongue, and talked such nonsense that Pulcheria could not understand anything; then he would take himself off to the kitchen to sleep.

Pulcheria boiled, salted and dried such a quantity of all her trifles that they would eventually have overflowed the whole garden (for, in addition to what she calculated

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

for use, she liked to prepare also a reserve), if the greater half of them had not gone to her maids who, sneaking into the larder, so appallingly overate themselves that they groaned all day long and complained of pains in their stomachs. At the ploughing and other household affairs outside the garden, Pulcheria had small opportunity of being present. Her clerk, in association with the steward, stole in shameless fashion. These acquired the habit of entering their master's forest as if it were their own, made a number of sledges and sold them at the nearest market; besides this, they sold all the fat oaks for the neighbouring Cossacks' mills. These worthy guardians, the clerk and the steward, found it quite superfluous to bring all the flour into their master's barns—half of it was quite enough for the gentlefolk; finally, too, they brought this half mouldy or damp, on which account it had been refused at the market. But no matter how the clerk and the steward stole; no matter how the whole household guzzled, from the stewardess to the pigs, who did away with a terrific quantity of plums and apples, and often with their very muzzles knocked a tree so as to shake off it a whole shower of fruit; no matter how the sparrows and crows pecked the berries; no matter how all the servants carried gifts to their cronies in other villages, and even bore off from the barns old linen and yarn, which all went at last to the universal spring, i.e., the tap-room; no matter how guests stole and phlegmatic coachman and butlers—still the blessed earth produced everything in such quantities, and so small were the needs of Athanasius and Pulcheria, that all these terrible

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

pillages seemed quite imperceptible. Sometimes, when it was clear weather and heated fairly hot in the rooms, Athanasius, growing merry, liked to play a joke upon Pulcheria and to talk of something unusual.

"Where should we go," said he, "if all of a sudden our house caught on fire?"

"Well, I never—Heaven preserve us!" said his wife, crossing herself.

"Yes, suppose our house were burnt: where should we go?"

"Heaven knows what you're saying! How could our house be burnt? Providence wouldn't allow it."

"But if it did burn down?"

"Well, we'd move over into the kitchens. You'd have to have the stewardess's room for a time."

"But suppose the kitchens were burnt down, too?"

"Well, I never did! The Lord would preserve us from such a visitation as for the house and kitchen both to be burnt down! Well, we'd have to move into the barn, while a new house was building."

"And if the barn were burnt, too?"

"I don't know what you're talking about! I don't want to listen to you! It's a sin to talk like that, and the Lord will punish you for it."

But Athanasius, contented to have played a joke on his wife, smiled, sitting in his chair.

But the old people were most interesting to me when they had guests. Then everything in their house took on another appearance. One might say that the good people lived for their guests. They brought out all the best they had. In turn they en-

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

deavoured to offer you all that their household produced. But what I found most pleasing was that with all their sweetness there was nothing overdone. Politeness and readiness were so kindly expressed in their faces, and so well suited them, that willy-nilly I used to agree to their requests. These qualities were the result of the clean, clear simplicity of their good, artless souls. The politeness was not at all that with which an official will entertain you, who has got promotion by your endeavours, and calls you his benefactor and crawls at your feet.

The guest was never allowed to depart on the day of his arrival; he was bound to spend the night there.

"How can you think of going so far so late at night!" Pulcheria used always to say. (The guest usually lived about two or three miles away.)

"Of course," said Athanasius, "anything might happen; robbers might set on you."

"The Lord defend us from robbers!" said his wife. "What do you want to talk like that for at night? Robbers or no robbers, it's a dark night, and it's best not to drive about in it at all."

And the guest had to remain; but still, the evening in the low, hot room, a pleasant, warming and drowsy tale, the steam borne from the food on the table, always appetisingly and excellently prepared, gave him his reward. I see, as if it were now, how Athanasius sits stooping in his chair with his eternal smile and listens to the guest with attention, even with delight. Often the talk turned on politics. The guest, who also would very rarely have travelled outside his own village, often,

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

with a significant glance and a mysterious expression on his face, used to offer his explanations and tell how the French had made a secret agreement with the English to let Bonaparte loose again on Russia ; or he would simply speak of the imminent war, and then Athanasius used often to say, pretending not to look at Pulcheria, "I am thinking myself of going to the war ; why shouldn't I go to the war ? "

"Well, I never ! " broke in Pulcheria. "Don't believe him," she would say, addressing the guest ; "how should an old man like he go to the war ! The first soldier would shoot him ; he would, he'd shoot him ! He'd just take aim and shoot him."

"What of it ? " said Athanasius. "I'd shoot *him.*"

"Only listen to him ! " broke in Pulcheria. "However is he to go to the war ? His pistols have got rusty long ago, lying in the lumber-room. If only you could see them ! Why, before they'd shoot, the powder would burst them. He'd bruise his hands and hurt his face, and be miserable for ever afterwards."

"Never mind," said Athanasius, "I'll buy myself new weapons. I'll take a sword or a Cossack's lance."

"All nonsense ! All sorts of things come into his head and he begins to talk about them," broke in Pulcheria with vexation. "I know he's joking, but, still, I don't like listening. He's always saying things like that ; sometimes you listen and listen and get quite afraid."

But Athanasius, contented to have frightened Pulcheria a little, would laugh as he sat stooping in his chair.

[*From MIRGOROD. Translated by C. E. Bechhofer.*]

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

II

PREPARATIONS FOR THE INSPECTOR

CHARACTERS

The Governor and Officials of a provincial town.

GOVERNOR: I have called you together, gentlemen, to lay a most unpleasant piece of news before you: an Inspector is coming!

JUDGE: What! An Inspector?

CONTROLLER OF CHARITIES: What! An Inspector?

GOVERNOR: An Inspector from Petersburg, incognito, and, what's more, with secret instructions.

JUDGE: Well I never!

CONTROLLER: Now we're in for it!

SCHOOLMASTER: Heavens alive! And with secret instructions too!

GOVERNOR: I had a kind of presentiment of it. All last night I dreamed of two extraordinary rats. Really, I've never seen any like them; they were black and of unnatural hugeness! They came, smelled round—and went away! Well, I'll read you the letter I've received. This is what my friend writes: "My dear old friend and benefactor"—(*mumbles under his breath, glancing through the letter*)—"and to inform you"—here it is: "I hasten, by the way, to inform you that an official has left here with instructions to inspect the whole province, and especi-

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

ally your district. I learnt this from most trustworthy sources, although he will make himself out to be a private individual. As I know that, like everybody else, you have your little faults, because you are a man of sense and do not like to miss what swims into your pockets——" (*Stops.*) That's just private —" so I advise you to take precautions, for he might arrive at any minute, if he hasn't come already and isn't living somewhere incognito. Yesterday——" Yes, these are family affairs again—" Anna's sister came with her husband to stay with us ; her brother has got much fatter, and never leaves off playing the violin——" and so on and so on. Well, there's the state of affairs !

JUDGE : Yes, an extraordinary state of affairs, simply extraordinary. There's some reason for this !

SCHOOLMASTER (*to* GOVERNOR) : But why ? What for ? Why is an Inspector coming ?

GOVERNOR (*sighing*) : Why ! It's fate ! (*Sighs again.*) Up till now—thanks be to God !—they've sneaked into other towns ; now it's our turn.

JUDGE : I think that this has a subtle and more political reason. It means this : Russia—ay, Russia—wants to make war, and the government, look you, is sending men about to discover whether there is treason anywhere.

GOVERNOR : What on earth are you talking about ? And you a man of sense ! Treason here ! Are we on the frontier ? You could gallop from here for three years and never reach another country !

JUDGE : No, I'll explain to you. You don't quite

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

—you don't—— Look here, the government has got keen eyes; no matter how far away a thing is, they'll make a note of it.

GOVERNOR: Note or no note, I have warned you, gentlemen. Listen! So far as I'm concerned, I've already made my arrangements; I warn you to do so, too, especially you, Controller. Without doubt the first thing the official will want to do on his arrival is to examine your charities; so see that everything is in order. For instance, let the patients in the hospital have clean nightcaps, and don't let them all look like chimney-sweeps, as they usually do.

CONTROLLER: Oh, that's no trouble at all. They can have clean nightcaps if you like.

GOVERNOR: Yes. And write over each bed in Latin or some other language—This will be your work, Doctor—the name of an illness, and when who got ill, with the day and date. It's not right for the invalids to smoke such strong tobacco that it makes you sneeze every time you go in. Yes, and it would be better if there were fewer of them: otherwise it'd be put down at once to bad looking after, or the Doctor's lack of skill.

CONTROLLER: Oh, in the matter of doctoring, the doctor and I know what to do: the nearer to nature, the better! We don't use expensive medicines. Man is a simple organism! If he dies, well, he dies; if he gets better, well, he gets better. Besides, the doctor would find it very difficult to get on with them otherwise; you see, he doesn't know a word of

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Russian. (*The doctor, a German, utters a sound half way between the letters* "i" *and* "e.")

GOVERNOR: I should advise you too, Judge, to pay a little attention to the court. In the hall there you know, where the plaintiffs usually are, the janitors have started to keep geese, and the little goslings run about the floor such a lot. Of course poultry-keeping is an excellent thing for anybody; so why not for the janitors? Only, you know, the place is not quite proper for it. I wanted to speak to you about it before, but I always forgot somehow.

JUDGE: Very well, I'll have them all taken to the kitchen to-day. If you like, you can come and have them for dinner.

GOVERNOR: Besides that, it's not right to have a lot of rubbish hanging up to dry in the court-room. And there's a hunting-crop hanging over the cupboard where all the documents are. I know you're fond of hunting, but it'd be better to take it down for a time; when the Inspector's gone, you can hang it up there again. Then your clerk—of course, he's a capable fellow, but there's always a smell about him as if he'd just come out of a distillery—and that's not right. I wanted to talk to you about this long ago, but something—I forget now what it was—put it out of my mind. There are remedies for it, you know, if it really is, as he says, his natural smell: you might advise him to eat onions or garlic or something like that. The doctor might help you with some drugs. (*The doctor utters the same sound again.*)

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

JUDGE: No, it can't be got rid of; he says that, when he was a baby, his nurse dropped him, and he has smelled of vodka ever since.

GOVERNOR: Well, I only just mentioned it to you. So far as professional re-arrangements go, and that which our friend in his letter calls "little faults," I can say nothing. It's such a curious thing to discuss; there isn't any man who has not had some faults or other. That's, as it were, the hand of God, and the Voltaireans deny it in vain.

JUDGE: What do you call faults? There are faults and faults. I tell you quite frankly, I take bribes: but what bribes? Beagle pups. That's not the same thing at all.

GOVERNOR: Beagle pups or anything else—it's a bribe just the same.

JUDGE: Oh, no. Let me state you a case: supposing a man has a fur coat worth five hundred roubles, and his wife a shawl——

GOVERNOR: Well, and what if you do take only beagle pups for bribes? Besides that, you don't believe in God, you never go to church, but I, at least, am a firm believer and attend church every Sunday. But you—— Oh, I know you! When you begin to talk of the Creation, people's hair simply stands on end.

JUDGE: Anyhow, I did think it out for myself, with my own brain!

GOVERNOR: All I can say is, in some cases too much brain is worse than none at all. However, I only just mentioned about the district court, though, to

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

tell the truth, nobody's ever likely to inspect it; you judges have all the luck! I wish we others had the same. But, in your case, Schoolmaster, as educational authority, you must pay particular attention to the teachers. Of course, they are very learned people and educated at various universities, but their behaviour is very curious, which is, of course, inseparable from the scholastic calling. One of them, for instance, the one who has such a fat face—I can't remember his name—whenever he goes up to his desk, he can't avoid making a grimace: like this—(*makes a grimace*)—and after that he puts his hand under his collar and begins to smooth his beard. Of course, if he makes a face like that at a pupil, it doesn't matter at all—perhaps it's even necessary—I can't pass judgment on that; but judge for yourselves, suppose he does it to a visitor—it might turn out very badly: the Inspector or somebody else might think it was meant for him. Deuce only knows what the result would be.

SCHOOLMASTER: But what can I do with him? I've already spoken about it several times. Why, just a day or two ago, when a general happened to come into the classroom, he pulled such a face as I never saw before in my life. He did it quite innocently, but I got into trouble for "letting revolutionary ideas be instilled into the children"!

GOVERNOR: Also I must draw your attention to the history teacher. He's a learned scholar, we all know, and has got a load of knowledge, only he explains things with such heat that he forgets him-

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

self. I listened to him once; well, while he was talking about the Assyrians and the Babylonians, he was quite all right; but when he began about Alexander the Great, why, I can't tell you what happened to him. I thought there was a fire—— Word of honour! he jumped off his desk and with all his strength banged a chair on the floor! It's true that Alexander the Great was a hero, but why break chairs?—that costs the department money.

SCHOOLMASTER: Yes, he's hot-headed! I've told him about it many a time. But he says: "Do as you like, but for the sake of knowledge I wouldn't spare even life."

GOVERNOR: Yes, that's the inexplicable law of fate, a wise man is either a drunkard or he makes faces to frighten angels!

SCHOOLMASTER: The Lord spare any one from being a schoolmaster! You're afraid of everybody, every one interferes, every one wants to show you that he's as wise as you are.

GOVERNOR: That's nothing——It's this damned incognito!

[*THE REVISOR, Act I. Scene 1. Translated by C. E. Bechhofer.*]

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

I. GONCHARÓV

(1812–1891)

OBLÓMOV AND HIS SERVANT

(*Zahar tells his master that the landlord insists on his vacating the flat.*)

"WHY do you keep on suggesting that I should move?" said Elia Elich Oblómov. "Is it in human strength to endure it?"

"I thought," said Zahar, "that if others no worse move, so can we."

"What? what?" Oblómov asked, in sudden amazement, rising in his chair. "What did you say?"

Zahar was confused. He didn't know what he could have done to give his master cause for this exclamation. He was silent.

"Others no worse!" repeated Oblómov, with horror. "That's the way you spoke! I shall know now that I am just the same for you as 'others.'"

He bowed ironically to Zahar and made a still more insulted face.

"I beg your pardon, Elia Elich; did I say you were the same as somebody?"

"Out of my sight!" said Oblómov imperiously, pointing to the door. "I can't bear to look at you. 'Others'? A fine thing!"

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Zahar with a profound sigh went out of the bedroom to his own little room. "What a life!" he grumbled, climbing on the stove.

"My God!" groaned Oblómov too—he had wanted to consecrate the morning to work, but now he was upset for the whole day. And by whom? By his own servant, tried, devoted to him; and he had said that! How could he?

Oblómov for a long time could not calm himself; he lay down, got up, walked about the room, and lay down again. He saw in this degradation of himself by Zahar to the level of "others" a breach of his rights to the exclusive preference by Zahar of his master's person to everybody else in the world. He dived into the comparison, and considered who these "others" were and who he was, in what degree the parallel was possible and correct, and how heavy was the affront Zahar had heaped upon him; finally, whether Zahar had insulted him with full knowledge, that is, if he were persuaded that Elia Elich was just the same as an "other," or if he had only made the comparison in words, without the participation of his head. All this wounded Oblómov's self-esteem, and he determined to show Zahar the difference between himself and those Zahar conceived under the name of "others," and to make him realize all the abominableness of his behaviour.

"Zahar," he called, slowly and solemnly.

Zahar, hearing the call, did not, as usual, jump down from the stove, scraping his feet and grumbling—he got down slowly and went softly, unwillingly, catching on to everything with his hands and sides, like a dog that

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

from the voice of its master feels its crime is discovered and it is being called to punishment.

Zahar half opened the door, but did not decide to enter.

"Come inside!" said Elia Elich.

Although the door opened freely, Zahar opened it as if he could not get through, and for that reason stayed at the door without entering.

Oblómov was sitting on the side of the bed. "Come here!" he said firmly.

Zahar with difficulty got free from the door, but closed it directly behind him and pressed it with his back.

"Here!" said Elia Elich, pointing to a place in front of him. Zahar made half a pace and stopped, five yards from the appointed place. "Further!" said Oblómov.

Zahar appeared to be making a step, but really he only quivered, shuffling his feet, and stayed where he was. Elia Elich, seeing he could not succeed in enticing Zahar nearer, let him stay and looked at him for some time, reproachfully, in silence. Zahar, feeling the awkwardness of this silent contemplation of his person, appeared not to observe his master, as if he were standing somewhere quite independently of him. Not for a moment did he cast his glance exclusively upon Elia Elich. Stubbornly he began to look on the other, the left-hand side; there he saw an object long known to him—the fringe of cobweb round the picture, and the spider, a living reproach of his shortcomings.

"Zahar!" said Elia Elich softly, with dignity.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Zahar did not answer. Apparently he was thinking, "Well, whom do you want? Another Zahar, or me? Here I am," and transferred his glance past his master from left to right. There, too, he was reminded of himself by the mirror, shrouded, as if with muslin, with thick dust; through it his own morose, unlovely face looked at him askance, as if out of a mist. With displeasure he removed his glance from that sad object, too well known to him, and dared to rest it for a moment upon Elia Elich. Their glances met. Zahar could not support the reproach written in his master's eyes and cast down his look to his feet. There again on the carpet, covered with dust and stains, he read a sad proof of his zeal in his master's service. "Zahar!" repeated Elia Elich with emotion.

"Yes?" asked Zahar, scarcely audibly, almost trembling in the expectation of a pathetic harangue.

"Give me some kvas!" said Elia Elich.

Zahar was relieved from his very heart; joyfully he dashed to the sideboard like a youth and fetched the kvas.

"What were you thinking about?" asked Elia Elich kindly, emptying the glass and holding it in his hand. "Come, surely it wasn't right of you?"

The wild look on Zahar's face instantly softened, and a ray of repentance began to shine in its lines. Zahar felt the first indications of a respectful feeling towards his master penetrating his breast and treading to his heart, and he suddenly began to look him straight in the eyes.

"Do you realise your fault?" asked Elia Elich.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

"What fault is that?" thought Zahar sorrowfully, "something miserable!"

"What's the matter, Elia Elich?" began Zahar with the lowest note of his diapason. "I didn't say anything, except that——"

"No, wait!" broke in Oblómov; "do you understand what you did? Put this glass on the table and answer."

Zahar did not answer, and decidedly did not understand what he had done, but this did not hinder him from looking respectfully at his master. He even hung his head a little in recognition of his fault.

"What a venomous man you are!" said Oblómov.

Zahar was still silent, and only blinked hard two or three times.

"You made your master angry!" said Elia Elich after a pause, and stared at Zahar, enjoying his confusion.

Zahar did not know where to hide from the affliction.

"Do you see, you made him angry?" asked Elia Elich.

"I made him angry," whispered Zahar, quite losing his head at this new *miserable* word. He looked for salvation to right and left and straight before him, and again there shone round him the cobweb and the dust and his reflection and his master's face. "What a life!" he thought, seeing that there was no escape for him from the pathetic scene.

And so he felt and blinked oftener and oftener as if tears would flow. At last he answered his master in the words of the song, only in prose—"How did I make you angry, Elia Elich?" he said, almost in tears.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

"How?" repeated Oblómov. "Have you thought what sort of person an 'other' is?" He paused, continuing to look at Zahar. "Shall I tell you?"

Zahar twisted like a bear in its den and sighed for his own room.

"The 'other,' whom you were thinking of, is a poverty-cursed, rude, uncivilized person; he lives dirtily and miserably in a garret, he boozes somewhere in a court. What happens to him? Nothing. He eats potatoes and trots about all day long. He packs up a couple of shirts in a handkerchief and off he goes. 'Where are you going?' 'I'm moving,' he says. There's an 'other' for you! And, according to you, I'm an 'other'—eh?"

Zahar looked at his master, standing first on one leg then on the other, and was silent.

"Who is an 'other'?" continued Oblómov. "An 'other' is the sort of man who cleans his own boots, dresses himself, and if he ever looks like a gentleman it's a lie; he doesn't know what servants are. He has nobody to send, he has to run his own errands; he puts his own firewood in the stove, and sometimes sweeps up his own dust."

"There are a lot of Germans like that," said Zahar gruffly.

"Exactly! And I? How can you think that I'm an 'other'?"

"You're another altogether!" said Zahar plaintively, quite misunderstanding what his master wanted him to say. "Heaven only knows what made you think that."

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

"I'm an 'other' altogether!—eh? Stop! Just look what you're saying! Look how an 'other' lives. An 'other' works without getting tired and runs about and struggles," continued Oblómov. "If he doesn't work, he doesn't eat. An 'other' takes his hat off, an 'other' begs, an 'other' humbles himself. And I? Come, tell me, what do you think. I'm an 'other'—eh?"

"Oh, stop, little father, stop these miserable words!" groaned Zahar. "Oh, my God!"

"I'm an 'other'! Perhaps I run about; perhaps I work? I've only a little to eat, eh? I'm thin and miserable to look at? Perhaps I'm in want of something? I've got to get this and do that: somebody wants it? I have never put on my own boots in my life, thank God! Do I get anxious? Why should I? And whom am I talking to? Haven't you looked after me ever since I was a child? You know all this, you saw that I was delicately brought up, that I never had to bear cold or hunger, or know want or earn my own bread or busy myself generally with such things. How could you dream of comparing me with 'others'? Perhaps I've got the health of those 'others'? Perhaps I can do all those things and stand them?"

Zahar resolutely summoned all his ability to understand what Oblómov was saying, but his lips swelled from inward agitation. The pathetic scene thundered like a storm-cloud over his head. He was silent.

"Zahar!" repeated Elia Elich.

"What?" whispered Zahar, hardly audibly.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

"Give me some more kvas."

Zahar fetched the kvas and, when Elia Elich had drunk and given him the glass, made as if to go to his own room.

"No, no, you stop!" said Oblómov. "I'm asking you, how could you insult your master like this, whom you carried in your arms when he was a child, whom you have served for ages, and who is your benefactor?"

Zahar could not endure it; the word "benefactor" finished him! He began to blink faster and faster.

[*OBLÓMOV, Part I, ch.* 8. *Translated by C. E. Bechhofer.*]

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

A. GRIBOYÉDOV

(1790–1829)

CHATSKI DISSATISFIED WITH MOSCOW

CHARACTERS

Fámusov, a bureaucrat.
Sophia, his daughter.
Chátski. Guests.

(*Chatski, a young man who has just returned to Moscow after a long absence, revisits Sophia, and unintentionally wounds her vanity with his wit. Fámusov he amazes with dispraise of the bureaucracy. To revenge herself, Sophia spreads a rumour at a ball that Chatski is mad.*)

A LADY: Here he comes!

ANOTHER: Ssh!

ALL: Ssh! (CHATSKI *enters; they edge away from him.*)

FAMUSOV: Lord, have mercy upon us! (*Cautiously, to* CHATSKI.) My dear old fellow, you're not quite fit; you require rest after your journey. Let me feel your pulse. You're ill!

CHATSKI: Yes, I'm tired out. I've a million pains in my chest from friendly hugs, in my arms from handshakes, in my ears from welcomes, and still

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

more in my head from all sorts of nonsense! I'm lost in these crowds; I'm not myself. No! I'm dissatisfied with Moscow!

A LADY: D'you hear him—Moscow's to blame!

FAMUSOV: Stand back from him! Sophia, don't look at him!

SOPHIA (*to* CHATSKI): Tell us what has upset you.

CHATSKI: A little affair in the other room: a French fellow from Bordeaux was bursting his lungs there, with a sort of court collected round him. He was telling them how he had got ready for the journey to Russia and its barbarians with terror and tears, and how he arrived and found a never-ending welcome; he never met a sound of Russian or a Russian face—he might have been in his own country, among his own people, in his own province! Look at him: in the evenings here he feels himself a little king! The ladies all talk in the same way as his Frenchwomen do, and wear the same clothes. *He's* glad, but *I'm* not glad! When he had said all this, there were murmurs and sighs and groans all round him. "O, France! There's no lovelier country on earth!" cried two sister princesses, repeating a lesson they had had drummed into them from birth. Where can one escape from these princesses! Speaking aloud but addressing nobody in particular, I expressed a mild desire that the Lord would destroy this unclean spirit of vain, servile, blind imitation: and would let fall a spark into some one with a soul, who could hold us in with word and deed from this miserable retching after a foreign country. You may call

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

me old-fashioned, but I like our north a hundred times less since it abandoned everything to a new measure—its manners and speech and the sacred past; since it changed its stately robes for others fit only for laughter, with a tail behind and a cut in front, contrary to all reason, regardless of the weather, a hindrance to movement, and no ornament to the figure! Funny, shaven, grey chins! And now our wit is as short as our dress and our hair! Oh, if we are born to mimic everything, let us imitate the Chinese in their excellent contempt for foreigners! Shall we ever awake from this tyranny of fashions? If only our wise, kindly peasant-folk, when they hear us speak, didn't take us for Germans! "However can you contrast our European manners with our Russian manners?—it's ridiculous!" some fool babbled to me; "for example, how would you translate *Madame* and *Mademoiselle*? What did I hear you say?—*Mistress!* Ha!"—And what do you think: they all began to laugh at me—"*Mistress!* Ha, ha, ha, ha, excellent! *Mistress!* Ha, ha, ha, terrible!"—I got angry and cursed and swore and prepared them a thundering reply—but they all turned and left me! That's what happened to me, and it's nothing new. It's only at Moscow and Petersburg where any fellow from Bordeaux can open his mouth and have the satisfaction of interesting all the princesses. At Petersburg and Moscow whoever is a foe to these French "gentlemen on approval" and to these whims and flowery words, in whose head—poor fellow!—there are five or six sound ideas, and who dares

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

declare them publicly, just look!—(*He looks round; everybody is waltzing busily. The older people have gone off to the card-tables.*)

[*WOE FROM WIT, Act III, Scene* 22.
Translated by C. E. Bechhofer.]

N. KARAMZÍN

(1766–1826)

LETTERS

I

WEIMAR

July 21, 1789.

YESTERDAY I was twice at Wieland's house, and twice I was told that he was not at home. To-day I went to him at eight o'clock in the morning, and saw him. Picture a rather tall man, thin, long-faced, pock-marked, fair, and almost bald, whose eyes had once been grey, but had become red from reading—this is Wieland.

The desire to see you has brought me to Weimar, I said. "It was not worth the trouble," replied he, with a cold look and a grimace that I did not at all expect from Wieland. After this, he asked me how I, living in Moscow, had learned to speak German. Replying that I had had occasion to speak with Germans there, and especially with such as knew their tongue well, I happened to recall L. Then the conversation turned to this unhappy man, whom he had once known very well. Meanwhile we continued to stand, from which I

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

was forced to conclude that he did not intend to keep me long in his study. Of course, I have come at the wrong time? I asked. No, he replied, although in the mornings we are usually occupied.

"Then allow me to come at another hour; only name the hour. I repeat to you that I have come to Weimar solely in order to see you."

WIELAND: What do you want with me?

I: Your works made me love you, and aroused in me the wish to know the author personally. I desire nothing except to see you.

WIELAND: You are making me embarrassed. May I speak to you frankly?

I: Please.

WIELAND: I do not like making new acquaintances, and especially with such persons as are not known to me in any way. I do not know you.

I: True; but what risk do you run?

WIELAND: Nowadays in Germany it has become the fashion to make journeys and write descriptions of them. Many people travel about from town to town and attempt to converse with those who are well-known only in order afterwards to print all they heard them say. What had been said under four eyes they offer to the public. I am not sure of myself; at times I may be too frank.

I: Remember that I am not a German and cannot write for the German public. Besides, you could bind me with my word of honour.

WIELAND: What use is it for us to be acquainted? Suppose that we agree in the form of our thoughts

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

and sentiments, shall we not finally have to part? Indeed, you are not going to live here.

I: In order to have the pleasure of seeing you, I can remain at Weimar ten days, and on taking leave of you, I should rejoice to have known Wieland—to have known him as a father amidst his family, and as a friend among friends.

WIELAND: You are very frank. Now I must be cautious that, on the other hand, you do not observe anything bad in me.

I: You are joking.

WIELAND: Not in the least. In addition to this, it would be on my conscience if you remained here simply for me. Perhaps in another German town, at Gotha, say, you would be more amused.

I: You are a poet, and I love poetry: how pleasant it would be for me if you would permit me to pass only an hour in conversation with you about its enchanting beauties?

WIELAND: I do not know how to talk to you. Perhaps you are my master in poetry.

I: You flatter me! And so I must say farewell to you for the first and last time.

WIELAND (*looking at me with a smile*): I am not a physiognomist, but your face compels me to have a certain confidence in you. I like your frankness; and you are the first such Russian I have seen. I have met your S——, a sharp man, bred in the spirit of that old man—(*pointing to a bust of Voltaire*). Usually your countrymen try to imitate the French; but you——

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

I: Thank you.

WIELAND: So, if it is convenient to you to spend two or three hours with me, come to me to-day after dinner at half-past two.

I: You wish to be condescending!

WIELAND: I wish to have the pleasure of your company, I say, and I beg you not to think that you alone in the world are frank.

I: Good-bye.

WIELAND: I shall expect you at half-past two.

I: I shall be here. Good-bye.

There you have a detailed description of our conversation, which at first wounded my pride to the quick. The conclusion cooled me somewhat; however I went, still all in agitation, from Wieland to Herder, and decided to leave Weimar the next day.

Herder received me with the same gentle kindness as the day before—with the same courteous smile and the same look of frankness.

We spoke about Italy, whence he had recently returned and where the relics of ancient art were a worthy object of his curiosity. Suddenly there came into my mind: what if I were to try to make my way from Switzerland into Italy and to see the Medici Venus, the Apollo Belvidere, the Farnesian Hercules, the Olympian Jove—to see the majestic ruins of ancient Rome and to sigh over the corruptibility of everything under the sun? And this thought so affected me that for a minute I quite orgot where I was. I confessed to Herder, turning the conversation to his work, that his *Origin of the Human Species* seemed to me

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

for the most part incomprehensible. "I wrote that book in my youth," he replied, "when my imagination was in all its stormy impetuosity, and when it still gave reason no account of its ways."

"Your spirit," said I, taking leave of him, "is known to me by your works; but I wanted to have your image on my soul and for that I came to you—I have now seen you, and am content."

It is pleasant, dear friends of mine, to see at last the man who had been so known and dear to us before by his writings: whom we had so often pictured or attempted to picture. Now, it seems to me, I shall with still greater pleasure read the creations of Herder's mind, remembering the look and the voice of the author.

Nine o'clock in the evening.

I went to Wieland at the appointed time. His young and beautiful children surrounded me on the steps. "Father is waiting for you," said one. "Go to him," said two together. "We will take you," said a fourth. I kissed them all and went to their father.

"Pardon me," said I, as I approached him, "excuse me if my previous visit was not altogether pleasing to you. I hope that you will not consider as iupudence what was the act of enthusiasm, aroused in me by your beautiful writings."

"You have no need to make excuses," he replied. "I am glad that this ardour for poetry is so widely spread, whereas in Germany it is dying away."

Then we sat upon a sofa. A conversation began, which from minute to minute became livelier and more interesting to me. Speaking of his love for

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

poetry, he said: "If Fate had destined me to live on a desert island, I should have written just the same, and I should have finished my works with the same effort, thinking that the Muses heard my songs."

He wished to know, did I write; and were not some of my trifles translated into German? I searched in my pocket-book for a translation of the *Sad Spring*. On reading it, he said: "I am sorry if you are often in such a humour as is described here. Tell me—because you have now awakened a desire in me to know you more intimately—tell me, what have you in view?" "A quiet life," I replied. "When I finish my journey, which I undertook solely in order to collect some pleasant impressions and to enrich my fancy with new ideas, I shall live in peace with Nature and good men, love the beautiful and enjoy it."

"Who loves the Muses and is loved by them," said Wieland, "will not be idle in solitude, and ever finds for himself a pleasant task. He bears in himself the spring of pleasure—his own creative power, which makes him happy."

At six o'clock I rose. He took my hand and said that with all his heart he wished me happiness in life.

"You have seen me as I really am," he said. "Good-bye, and occasionally at least remind me of yourself. I shall always reply to you, wherever you are. Good-bye." Then we embraced. It seemed to me that he was somewhat affected, and this affected me too. On the steps we pressed each other's hand for the last time, and parted—perhaps for ever. Never, never shall I forget Wieland! Could you but see,

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

friends, with what frankness, with what fire this man of almost sixty years of age speaks, and how all the lines of his face are animated in conversation! His soul has not yet grown old, nor its powers exhausted. *Clelia and Sinibald*, the latest of his poems, is written with the same fullness of spirit as *Oberon*, as *Musarion*, and the others. In his later creations, indeed, he seems to approach nearer and nearer to perfection. For thirty-five years Wieland has been known in Germany as an author. His very first works, for example, *Moral Tales*, *Sympathy*, and the others, attracted to him the attention of the public. Although the strict criticism which had then already commenced in Germany found in them many imperfections, still it gave the author due credit for his powers of invention, his rich fancy and live sympathies. But his fame commenced with his comic tales, acknowledged to be excellent of their kind and at that time unique in German. The critics marvelled at his keenness, taste, beauty of language, and art in narrative. Afterwards he published poem upon poem, and the last always seemed the best. Long ago Germany has acknowledged him one of her foremost singers; he rests on his laurels, but does not sleep.

If the French have changed, at last, their old bad opinion of German literature (which once it really deserved, when the Germans applied themselves only to dry erudition), if the wiser and juster of them are agreed that the Germans are not only equal to them in much, but in much have even surpassed them, certainly the works of Wieland have partly brought this about,

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

although they are not well translated into French.

Yesterday evening, walking past the house where Goethe lives, I saw him looking through the window—I stopped and gazed at him for a minute: a serious Grecian face! To-day I went to his house; but I was told that he had left early for Jena.

At Weimar there are still other well-known writers: Bertuch, Bode, and so on. Bertuch translated *Don Quixote* from the Spanish, and published the *Magazine of Spanish and Portuguese Literature*; Bode is famous for his translation of Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* and *Tristram Shandy*. The Duchess Amalia loved talent. She invited Wieland to her court and committed to him the education of the young duke; she invited Goethe when he became famous by his *Werther*. She also invited Herder to be director of the local clergy.

Farewell, my friends. The clear night calls me out from my room. I take my pilgrim's staff—I am going to gaze at Nature as she falls asleep, and to journey with my eyes in the starry heavens.

II

THE FRENCH CHARACTER

July, 1790.

I say "fire and air"—and the character of the French is described. I do not know a nation more clever, more fiery, and more windy than yours. It seems as if they had invented the social life, or this had been invented for them, so amiable are they and so remarkably delicate their nice ideas on the art of living with people!

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

It is rather adorable nature than art. None but the French can caress a man with a look, with a polite smile. In vain the Englishman or the German attempts to learn this before a mirror: on their face it is foreign and constrained. I wish to live and die in my own dear fatherland; but after Russia there is no land more pleasant to me than France, where the foreigner often forgets that he is not among his own countrymen. It is said that here it is hard to find a frank, true friend. Ah, friends are rare everywhere; and is a foreigner to seek them, who comes like a comet and disappears? Friendship is a necessity of life; every one needs a true object for it. But all that in justice I can demand from strangers the Frenchman offers me with a caress, with a bouquet of flowers. The windiness and inconstancy, which are the blemishes of his character, are united in him with amiable properties of soul, arising in some fashion from his very defects. The Frenchman is inconstant—and not revengeful; wonder and praise soon weary him—hate also. By his fickleness he retains what is good and gets rid of what is harmful; on the other hand, he is the first to laugh at his own mistakes—and even to cry, if necessary. A merry unreasonableness is the dear companion of his life. As the Englishman rejoices at the discovery of a new island, so the Frenchman rejoices at a witty phrase. Sensitive to an extreme, he falls passionately in love with truth, with glory, with great enterprises; but he is an inconstant lover! The moments of his zeal, enthusiasm, hate, may have terrible consequences: an example of which is the Revolùtion. It is a pity this terrible

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

political change must change also the character of a people so merry, witty, and amiable.

III

LONDON

September, 1790.

There was a time when I, who had scarcely seen any Englishmen, was enraptured with them, and pictured England as the land most pleasing to the heart of my country. Now that I see the English closely, I do them justice, I praise them, but my praise is as cold as they are themselves.

In the first place, I should not like to live in England on account of the climate, damp, gloomy and sad. I know that it is possible to be happy even in Siberia, when the heart is content and joyful; still a gay climate makes us gay, and in the sorrow and melancholy here, more than anywhere else, you want to shoot yourself. Groves, parks, meadows, gardens, these excel in England, but all covered with fogs, gloom and coal smoke. Rarely, rarely the sun peeps out, and then not for long; and, without it, our life is dreary. "Give my respects to the sun," wrote some one from here to his friend in Naples, "I have not seen him for a long time." The English winter is not as cold as ours; on the other hand, we have our bright days, which are rare here even in summer. How can an Englishman avoid looking September?

In the second place, I do not like their cold character at all.

"It is a volcano, covered with ice," said a French

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

emigrant to me with a smile. But I stand and look; I do not see the flames, but meanwhile I freeze. My Russian heart loves to pour out in frank, lively conversation, loves the play of the eyes, the quick change of the face, the expressive movements of the hand. The Englishman is silent, even-tempered, talks like a book, never disclosing the swift currents of soul which shake magnetically our whole physical system. It is said that he is profounder than other men: is not this because he seems profound, because the thick blood moves in him more slowly and gives him the appearance of meditation, often without any ideas? But that the English are enlightened and judicious, I agree: here workers read Hume's *History*, the servant-girl Yorick's *Sermons* and *Clarissa*; here the shopkeeper reasons learnedly on the commercial advantages of his fatherland, and the labourer talks to you of Sheridan's eloquence; here all men have newspapers and journals in their hands, not only in the towns, but also in the little villages. The English love to be charitable, love to surprise with their generosity, and always assist one in need, as soon as they are convinced that he is not shamming misfortune. In the opposite case they would sooner let him die of hunger than help him, fearing a deception offensive to their self-esteem. It has been observed that in foreign countries the English are much more lavish of charity than in their own, thinking that in England, where every form of labour is properly rewarded, a good man cannot be in need; whence they have a rule: who among us is poor is unworthy of a better lot—a terrible law! Here poverty

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

is made an offence! It endures and must be silent. Ah, if you wish to oppress still more one who is oppressed by want, send him to England; here, amidst the signs of riches, flowering abundance and piles of guineas, he will know the torture of Tantalus! But how false a rule! Cannot a conjunction of evils lead even the most industrious to the beggar's wallet? An illness, for example.

The English are honest; they have their own ways, their family life, the associations of kin and friendship—let us admire them! Their word, friendship and acquaintance are secure: the effect perhaps of the common spirit of commerce, which accustoms people to respect and to maintain confidence in all its degrees. But this strict honesty does not prevent them from being subtle egoists. Such they are in their commerce, politics, and private relations among themselves. All is designed, all is calculated, and the final motive is personal profit. Observe that cold people are usually great egoists. In them the mind works more than the heart: and the mind always turns to a man's own profit, as a magnet to the north.

To do good, not knowing why, is the way of *our* poor, unreasoning heart. But they are proud—and, above all, of their Constitution. I read De Lolme here with great attention. Laws are good, but they must be well kept, if people are to be happy. For instance, an English minister, provided he regards certain forms or legal customs, may do anything he likes: he scatters money, promises places, and Members of Parliament are ready to serve him. A few opponents

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

quarrel and complain, and that is all. But it is important that a minister should always be a man of excellent intelligence, able to give a firm, clear and instant reply to all the objections of his opponents; still more important is it that he must beware of employing his power for evil. For the English are enlightened: they know instinctively their true advantage, and if even Pitt were to think of acting openly against the common good, he would inevitably lose the majority of votes in Parliament, as the sorcerer his talisman.

And so, not the Constitution but the enlightenment of the English is their true Palladium. All civil institutions ought to be conformable with the character of the people: what is good in England will be bad for another country. Not unwisely said Solon: "My constitutions are the best, but only for Athens." But, after all, every administration of which the soul is justice, is benevolent and satisfying.

Finally—if it is possible to define in one word the characteristic of Englishmen—I should call them *serious*, as the French are *frivolous*, and the Italians *crafty*. To see England is very pleasing; the customs of the people, the progress of enlightenment and of all the arts are noteworthy and memorable.

But to live here for the pleasures of society is to seek flowers on a sand-hill—in this I agree with all the foreigners whom I chanced to meet in London. I should come even a second time to England with pleasure, but I leave her without regret.

[*Translated by C. E. Bechhofer.*]

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

L. KOSSÁTCH ("LÉSYA UKRÁINKA")

(1872–1913)

THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY

CHARACTERS

Eleazar	Captives
Levites	Prophets

Overseers

(*A wide plain. The red sunset turns the waters of the Euphrates to blood. Scattered on the plain are seen the tents of the Hebrew captives. Naked children seek shells in the mud and gather brushwood for the fires. Weary women, mostly old, in rags, are busied preparing supper, each at her own hearth, for the men that have just returned from the town after their toil and are sitting silently under the willows near the water. A little farther off, also under the willows, stand two groups, the Levites and the prophets. On the willows, over the prophets' heads, harps hang; quivering from time to time, they jingle in the evening wind. Far away are seen the walls and towers of Babylon and sometimes there comes the noise of the city.*)

A WOMAN (*at her fire*): Husband, come to supper. (*A man, still young, leaves a group and silently sits down.*)

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

WOMAN: Why dost not eat bread? (*The man is silent.*) Is it bitter? There is naught to be done, poor thing, thou must eat.

THE MAN (*mumbling like an old man*): I cannot eat.

WOMAN: Misery! Hast no teeth? Where——

MAN: There! (*Points to Babylon.*)

WOMAN: Misery, misery, misery!

AN OLD MAN (*approaches an old woman sitting by the extinguished fire of another hearth, motionless, her head bowed down*): Give me supper! (*The woman is silent and motionless.*) Why hast not prepared it? (*The woman is silent.*) Why hast ashes on thy hair? (*The woman is silent, and bows still lower.*) Where is our daughter?

THE OLD WOMAN: There! (*Points to Babylon and pours ashes upon her head.*)

OLD MAN: Adonai! (*Tears his garments and falls down. At a third fire sit only men, mostly old. A woman approaches timidly; ragged children hang at her garments.*)

THE WOMAN: My fathers, pardon that I ask you: have ye not seen my husband?

AN OLD MAN: How is he called?

THE WOMAN: Ebenezer of Ossia.

ANOTHER OLD MAN: Was he so called before thou wert a widow?

THE WOMAN: What sayest thou?

A THIRD OLD MAN: Do not kill thyself! Foes do not torment the dead.

THE WOMAN: What shall I do, miserable, with my little children?

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

THE CHILDREN: Mother, mother, mother!

A MAD WOMAN (*wandering among the fires*): Happy the womb that did not bear; happy the breast that gave not suck. Hey! rejoice not, Babylonian woman! Hey! be not glad, mother of vipers' sons!

A GIRL (*whispers to her companion, pointing at the mad woman*): 'Tis from the time her child was killed in Jerusalem.

COMPANION: How terrible!

GIRL: And I saw it with my own eyes, how the soldier seized her boy by his feet and struck at——

COMPANION: Be silent!

THE LEVITES (*under the willows*): For our fathers' sin the Lord took from us the temple; for our ancestors' dishonour He took away His church. And now, as a spendthrift's children, innocent we expiate our fathers' debt.

THE PROPHETS: Jerusalem smote us with stones, and for it the wrath of the Lord smote her. The daughter of Zion despised us, and for it the son of Baal subdued her.

FIRST LEVITE (*to another*): Why hast not been at prayers?

SECOND LEVITE: The master sent me to the reckonings. The workmen from Haram are being paid for their labour at the king's palace.

FIRST LEVITE: Couldst not find one of the scribes to take thy place?

SECOND LEVITE: Service, brother! The master says no men are so skilled at reckoning as the Hebrews.

FIRST LEVITE: True.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

SECOND LEVITE (*aside to him*): For my good help the chief gave me this ring.

FIRST LEVITE: Glory to the Lord, that He hath distinguished His people by wisdom above the nations of all the world. (*Aside.*) Is there no need of another to help? (*They whisper.*)

A SAMARIAN PROPHET: Thus spake the Lord: On Garisim I have builded an abode, on its summit I made Mine altar, but ye forsook it and knew not the house of My glory, as the foolish bibbing son knoweth not his father's abode and wandereth in outer darkness, a butt for strangers' children.

A JEWISH PROPHET: Thus spake the Lord: In Jerusalem I made Mine abode among the people, that, as bees come together to one hive, to one queen, so would ye come together unto Me, to the only Temple; but, as a wild swarm, ye flew away, and for it I sent evil hornets against you.

SAMARIAN PROPHET: The lion of Judah ravished Israel and dispersed his sheep.

JEWISH PROPHET: Saul's descendants are fit to be keepers of flocks, but not of the people.

SAMARIAN PROPHET: The Lord of Israel shall reach thee, and through me. (*Raises his staff against the Jewish Prophet.*)

JEWISH PROPHET: Lord, remember Thy servant David. (*Raises a stone to cast at the Samarian Prophet.* ELEAZAR, *a young prophet and singer, just come from Babylon, throws himself between the two.*)

ELEAZAR: Refrain! Cover not with shame the names of Israel and Judah.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

SAMARIAN PROPHET: Ah! is it thou, prophet of shame? And how hast thou glorified Israel and Judah?

JEWISH PROPHET: Vile serpent, why camest from that nest? There is thy God and thy people. Begone and glorify them!

FIRST LEVITE: May the Lord vomit thee out of His mouth, may thy name disappear as spittle! (*The people gather round.*)

SECOND LEVITE: (*catching a harp from the willows*): I will break this cursed vessel.

ELEAZAR (*catching his hand*): Touch not my harp, for it is innocent of my sins! Curse me, if thou thinkest I am worthy, but curse not the holy harp.

THIRD LEVITE: And how has it sanctified itself?

ELEAZAR: That never from the first rang a string insincerely.

A BOY: Aha! Therefore thou didst hang it there.

ELEAZAR (*to the Boy, sadly*): Why, youth, sayest thou so?

BOY: Pretend not thou dost not understand!

AN OLD MAN: This youth told thee, Eleazar, what thy conscience would have told thee—but a mute cannot speak.

A MAN: And it is a vanity to talk to the deaf. (*A child stretches out its arms to the harp.*)

THE CHILD: Uncle, give me the toy.

FIRST MOTHER: I told thee, dare not to come to this man.

AN OLD WOMAN (*to a girl standing near*): I see

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

there is no more shame in Israel, when a girl stands uncovered and looks upon a traitor.

THE GIRL: But I——

FIRST WOMAN: See, poor thing, it is a great woe when one cursed by God steals a girl's heart.

THE GIRL: If he be cursed, I also curse him. (*Veils herself and goes away.*)

ELEAZAR (*to all*): Fathers and brothers, mothers and sisters, since when is it a custom among us to condemn without judging? Truly, clearly tell me, why am I become as a leper among you?

THE OLD MAN: Thou becamest leprous in Babylon, singing for money in the courts to the sons of Baal.

ELEAZAR: Are ye not all gathered here in Babylon for labour?

FIRST MAN: Labourers do not serve Moloch.

ELEAZAR: Whom then do their arms and vessels serve? Have they not built such an abode for Moloch, as never had our Lord in Jerusalem?

FIRST PROPHET: Taunt not captives with their slavery!

ELEAZAR: Am I not a captive? Why curse ye me for my forced labour?

SECOND PROPHET: The cord, the spade, the plough and axe in men's hands are men's slaves; but the word in a prophet's mouth must serve God only, and none other.

THE OLD MAN: Yet wilt thou ask for judgment, Eleazar?

ELEAZAR: I will, though the judgment end with

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

stones. The Lord liveth! Ye must judge by truth; an unjust curse shall turn against you.

THE OLD MAN: Let us hear him. Let it not be said we forsook truth on the ruins of Jerusalem. Tell us what constrained thee to sell the word.

ELEAZAR: That none bought my hands. My father did not teach me to labour, and weak my mother bred me. Though the harp obeys my hands, nor plough nor axe obeys them. I fell under a burden, and the overseer drove me from the labour.

THE OLD MAN: Let then thy father and mother feed thee, who have not taught thee to earn bread.

ELEAZAR: In Jerusalem I earned honourably by the means they taught me, and here too—but the bread burns that my father brings from Babylon; hard it is to eat from a father's slavery.

FIRST LEVITE: Not only bread thy father brings, but also golden rings.

ELEAZAR (*to all*): Teach this Levite that gold burns, and not only shines.

FIRST LEVITE (*slyly*): Why does thy father's work burn so?

ELEAZAR: Am I judged here or my father? Bring then all fathers to judgment, who for their family lose their souls.

FIRST LEVITE: Why didst not cry to the nation to feed thee with the bread wherewith it feeds Levites and cripples?

ELEAZAR: I am not Levite nor cripple.

A LITTLE BOY (*to his father*): Daddy, give me bread!

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

THE FATHER: I have none, my son.

A MAN: Dost see? He heard talk of bread and eating, and says too, "Give me bread."

ELEAZAR: Rightly says the boy. He answered for me better than I could know. Ye all heard. While in Israel they speak thus, Eleazar will not share bread with Levites and cripples. He that has bread, let him give to the child; I will take stones from the captives. He that has fish, let him feed the children, and give me a viper that drinks blood from the heart. I shall take it and bear it with me into the courts; it will give sting to my words and its hissing they will hear in Babylon.

A YOUTH: Much wilt thou earn for such songs in Babylon! Surely less than thou hast earned for the hymns of Zion.

ELEAZAR: Unwisely, boy, hast spoken. I sang them not hymns of Zion. The hymn of Zion, of all songs the ornament, was as a bride in Jerusalem, as a wife in the holy city; here it were as a concubine, for who taketh a captive as a lawful wife? (*The people sigh.* ELEAZAR *holds his peace and bows his head.*)

A MAN: Why didst not sing the songs of captivity? Why hast not poured the bitter tears of slavery? The cold drop pierces the stone, why would not hot tears touch even the wicked heart?

ELEAZAR: The Lord set pride in my soul. Never have I wept before strangers.

A MAN: Pride befits not slaves.

FIRST PROPHET: The horn of pride in thee rose above grief and holy love!

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

ELEAZAR: Measure not the measureless with the endless, for thou wilt not see what will come of it.

A YOUTH: Eloquent is Eleazar among the captives. Why in the Babylonian courts do his love and grief and pride hold their peace? Surely the place is too small?

ELEAZAR: And didst thou think it were enough? O youth, I have measured all those Babylonian courts and know their size. It happened I crossed that court where our people is building a tower for Moloch. I stopped and gazed at it. The marble is white as bones in the field, the porphyry grey as shed blood, the gold shines as a bright fire. It stands unfinished, like ruins; the cries of our conquerors are heard, and the groans of our people. I know not how, with a great voice I shouted over the whole place, "Jerusalem!" With a cry answered the captives from the wall, and with laughter answered the guards. "Is that ruin called in any wise, has that desert still a name?" I went away to the market where they sell captives into slavery. There a rich merchant was choosing the most lovely captives.

WOMEN: Misery, misery, misery!

ELEAZAR: I said, "Think, lord, these girls have fathers and brothers. Were thy sister or daughter taken captive, would the foe sell her?" He answered, "'Tis the fate of captives." I went farther and saw a small, weak slave, and a tall, strong Babylonian loaded him with wares, as a mule, and drove him with a stick. I cried, "Stay! To torment such a small boy!" "For this he is a slave," he answered,

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

arrogant. "And were thy son sold," said I, "he too would be a slave?" "Surely; not otherwise," said the rich man, and laughed aloud, "but I do not sell my sons, and thine, thou seest, I buy." Who, what will touch such hearts? Once only with my songs I got a tear from a stranger; the king himself wept at the end of Saul and Jonathan's death.

A VOICE FROM THE PEOPLE: Long live the merciful king! In him only is our hope.

ELEAZAR: The merciful king wished to reward me generously.

FIRST LEVITE: What gave he thee, Eleazar?

ELEAZAR: He gave me a chamber in his palace and Jewish captives, as many as I would. From that moment I cursed the songs that get tears from conquerors; they are the tears of the Nile's crocodiles.

THE YOUTH: Thou shouldst have sung them of the fame of our ancestors, that they might know the strength of our people.

ELEAZAR: I sang.

THE YOUTH: And what? (ELEAZAR *is silent.*)

THE OLD MAN: Say, Eleazar, how the strangers heard the songs of fame.

ELEAZAR (*slowly*): One of them whistled and, smiling shook his head. Another said, "Not all that is true." A third bade me join the military singers; and all, one after the other, said, "Is there only that in the world which is in Jerusalem? Knowest thou no songs of Edom, of Misraim? Was not the fame of Amalek, Ammon and Amareus as the past fame of Israel?"

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

FIRST PROPHET: O Lord, chastise the hostile lips with the dumbness of death.

ELEAZAR: I began to sing them of Edom, of Misraim, of foreign speeches in a foreign speech. They heard how treacherous Edom's crooked sword broke against Ashur's armour; how Amalek, Ammon and Amareus from ravishers became slaves; how Misraim, master of half the world, once the lord of the tribes of Israel, had to submit to the eternal might; how horse and rider fell into the sea, and all the Pharaoh's might, whenas was voided the abhorred house of toil and the cursed place of slavery was devastated.

THE YOUTH: And what did the listeners?

ELEAZAR: There were those who paled.

SECOND PROPHET: May they grow pale and cold for ever!

THE YOUTH: Why didst not say that also for these will come a day of judgment?

ELEAZAR: For that word there is no room in Babylon! To-day I sang them of Ophir, Sidon and Tyre, their power and wisdom and treasures, as are not and never will be in the Babylonian treasuries.

FIRST LEVITE: Didst gain much for this song?

ELEAZAR: Thinkest, the treasures of Canaan? See, I have bread for this day's supper.

THE YOUTH: Surely, for songs that praised Babylon's power thou hast earned more than one golden ring?

ELEAZAR: The vile speaks only with poison, but poison hurts not every man. When heardest me

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

sing songs of the Babylonian glory and might? (*The youth is silent and ashamed.*) Thou hast judged thyself by thy silence.

THE OLD MAN: Eleazar, it may be thy songs are good in Babylon, but Misraim and Edom and all their tongues will not bring Palestine to mind and awake the thought of Jerusalem.

ELEAZAR: Is there already need to bring it to our minds?

THE OLD MAN: Not to us, but to those who among foes have used to speak the foreign speech.

ELEAZAR: How will they understand the inborn song? How sing it in a foreign speech?

THE OLD MAN: With thy foreign words thou wilt forget to say, "Jerusalem!" (ELEAZAR *stands thoughtfully. His hand begins to touch the strings of his harp, and his voice sounds, neither singing, nor wailing, as of one who sleeps.*)

ELEAZAR: My right hand was strong; who could overcome it? Did I then say to myself: "Happy am I; I have my right arm"? Spake I ever thus: "Right arm, know thou art mine!" But the evil foe wounded my hand and cut off my right arm. Whom shall I overcome now? Who will not overcome me? Day and night I say to myself, "O misery, where is my hand?" I look upon my shoulder and weep, "Right arm, how forget thee?" (*He quietly touches the strings. The people weep.*)

My father had a rich vineyard, my mother a green garden. I walked in it, plucked the berries and trampled the leaves with my feet. An evil neigh-

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

bour set fire to our vineyard and wasted the green garden. The vine was burned, the berries dropped and its glorious beauty fell to ashes. If I find beneath my feet, be it only one leaf, I shall press it to my heart. Dear brothers, say, has none of you, be it only one leaf from my vine? (*The strings sound still more sadly, and the weeping becomes louder.*)

I dreamed a dread dream—who shall divine it? 'Twas as if I fell into the hands of the enemies. What have they done to me, my terrible enemies? My arms still are mighty, my legs still are strong my eyes still are clear, and my body is not hurt. Only my tongue, my tongue was for their vengeance I wished to speak a word; I wished to lift up my voice. But my lips spake with blood and cried with silence. (*A long pause. The harp falls from his hands and the sigh of its strings dies away. The people's cries cease abruptly. Silence. He speaks with respect, but firmly and distinctly.* Fathers and brothers, mothers and sisters! I wait for a stone or a word from you. (*Silence.*) What curse is more awful than silence?

THE OLD MAN: We do not curse thee, Eleazar.

THE YOUTH: Forgive me my hard word, brother.

ELEAZAR: Ye do not curse me. I forgive all your words. But still I am cursed with the dreadful curse of blood. The blood of our fathers, shed in vain for our lost liberty, weighs upon my head and yours, and bows down our forehead to the earth, to the stone that the hand of my people hurled not against me. A man's son fell and cut himself on a sharp

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

stone; in despair he rent his garments of honour and strewed ashes of disgrace upon his head. Oh, as the temple I fell, as Jerusalem we fell all, and, as hard as it is to rebuild our temple, so hard it is for us to rise out of the dust of slavery's dishonour. Shame fell upon our arms that rose not to take the lives of us conquered, but rose to labour for the enemies. Leprosy covered the bodies of the girls of Zion, that they drowned not themselves in the Euphrates, but went to entertain the sons of lasciviousness and nurse the fruit of their shame. And shame covered my lips that from hunger these lips grew not still, but spake the strange speech in those cursed courts where all songs sound—and only that which bursts from the heart must die. Infamy oppresses us worse than chains, it bites worse than iron fetters. To suffer chains is inhuman shame, to forget them unbroken yet greater ignominy. Two paths we have, death or disgrace, till we find a way to Jerusalem. Brothers, let us look for a way to the temple as the gazelle seeks water in the desert that the mighty foe may not say, "Now have I slain Israel; it is dead!" And ere we find it, let us fight for our life as the wounded badger in the hunt; let it not be said among men, "The Lord of Israel fell asleep in heaven." O Babylon, too early is it to rejoice! Still our harps sound among the willows, still tears flow into the Babylonian rivers, still the daughter of Zion burns with shame, still the lion of Judah roars with fury. The Lord liveth, my soul liveth, Israel liveth, even in Babylon!

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

THE VOICE OF AN OVERSEER FROM THE CAMP :

To the tents, Israel ; the night cometh. (*The people separate and go to their tents. On the distant towers are seen the Babylonian magicians, foretelling from the stars. The camp grows still. From Babylon faintly comes the sound of revels. The solemn night trembles over the captive camp and Babylon. Here and there quicken the overseers' fires. Silence.*)

[*Translated by S. Volska and C. E. Bechhofer.*]

I. KRYLÓV

(1768–1844)

FABLES

I

THE ASS AND THE NIGHTINGALE

An ass a nightingale espied,
And shouted out, "Hallo! hallo! good friend!
Thou art a first-rate singer, they pretend:
Now let me hear thee, that I may decide;
I really wish to know—the world is partial ever—
If thou hast this great gift, and art indeed so clever."

The nightingale began her heavenly lays;
Through all the regions of sweet music ranging,
Varying her song a thousand different ways;
Rising and falling, lingering, ever changing:
Full of wild rapture now—then sinking oft
To almost silence—melancholy, soft
As distant shepherd's pipe at evening's close:
Strewing the wood with lovelier music; there
All nature seems to listen and repose:
No zephyr dares disturb the tranquil air:
All other voices of the grove are still,
And the charm'd flocks lie down beside the rill.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

The shepherd like a statue stands—afraid
His breathing may disturb the melody,
His finger pointing to the harmonious tree,
Seems to say, "Listen!" to his favourite maid.

The singer ended: and our critic bow'd
His reverend head to earth, and said aloud:

"Now that's so so; thou really hast some merit;
Curtail thy song, and critics then might hear it;
Thy voice wants sharpness: but if Chanticleer
Would give thee a few lessons, doubtless he
Might raise thy voice and modulate thy ear;
And thou in spite of all thy faults mayst be
A very decent singer."

The poor bird
In silent modesty the critic heard,
And winged her peaceful flight into the air,
O'er many and many a field and forest fair.

There are too many such critics nowadays.
Merciful Heaven! protect us from their praise.

[*Translated by Sir John Bowring.*]

II

THE CHEST

It often happens that our brains
We rack, and take most wondrous pains
When we need only try a guess,
And use the simplest means to win success.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

A new-made chest was home to the buyer brought,
And each that saw it cried, "A work of finished neatness!"
No one could praise enough its strength and its completeness.
Into the room a knowing locksmith came;
He gave it but a thought,
And swore it was a chest made with a secret spring:
"Just so, no lock; I'll open it all the same:
I think I ought to know this sort of thing!
Ah! you may smile and doubt,
But in a trice I'll find the secret out."
With that the chest in hand he takes,
And turns it o'er from side to side,
Till arm, and head, and body aches;
With nails and what not is the welding tried.
Meanwhile the lookers-on begin
To laugh, and whisper that he'd best give in;
Not he, he puffs, and pants, and fills each ear
With "'Tis not there, not so, not here."
He sweats, and shoves, and tries again; at last
He's tired, and the chest still fast;
He gives it up, it is beyond his skill;
And yet the lid may lift whoever will.

III

THE MUSICIANS

A man invited once his neighbour
To dine with him, but really sought,

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

As he to music gave up every thought,
To show his troop of singers well could labour.
The choir struck up; some high, some low,
Some shouting from a full-pitched throat.
The guest's ears cracked, and every note
His head made giddy like a blow.
"Excuse me, friend," said he with admiration,
"What is there to delight in here? Thy choir
Bawl rubbish to their heart's desire!"
"Right," said the host with smile of exultation,
"They do into a false note fall,
But then, they liquor never touch at all,
And all are men of conduct far, far above their station."

For my part, I say: rather drink, and show
That that, which you profess, you know.

IV

THE GEESE

Wielding a long sharp switch, a peasant
Once drove in haste some geese to town for sale,
And, truly to recount my tale,
His cackling flock scarce found him pleasant;
The market only he'd in view,
And, where the pocket is in danger,
Not only geese fare worse, but friend or stranger.
The peasant I don't blame, do you?
But our poor geese on that point otherwise commented,
And meeting with a traveller by the way,
To him their sad lot thus lamented:
"What geese unhappier are than we to-day?

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

That peasant is a scurvy master,
And drives us, just like simple geese, still faster, faster ;
It enters not the head of that dull clown,
That he might somewhat knuckle under
Before descendants of the geese that once saved Rome's great town—
Those noble geese were founders of our stock—from plunder ;
To honour them e'en days were sacredly observed."
" But you, for what should your names be with theirs preserved ? "
Did ask the traveller then.—" Our ancestors . . ."
—" I know it,
I've read it all ; but tell me, can you show it,
The good that you've been to the State ? "
" Our sires averted Rome's sad fate ! "
" Just so, but you, what have you done save boasting ? "
" We ? Naught ourselves ! "—" Then is your worthlessness confessed ;
Go, let your fathers' well-won honours rest,
For you, my friends, are only good for roasting."

This fable might have been more clearly still explained ;
But then, how many geese it must have pained.

V

THE MICE IN COUNCIL

The Mice once formed a plan to gain great reputation,
And, in despite of cats, or toms or pussies,

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

To turn the heads of cooks and household hussies,
Rousing a chorus of general admiration,
From cellar up to garret, of their nation;
And to this end a Council they did call,
In which a seat to those should only fall
Whose tails were long as they themselves were tall:
Having observed that Mice with tails than others longer
Were wiser, stronger,
And far more agile than the rest.
We won't stop now to ask if this were wise;
When we ourselves of wisdom judge, we've often eyes
But for a coat, or beard at best.
Suffice it may that, by unanimous consent,
All long-tailed brothers of the race were members named;
But none whose tails unhappily were maimed,
E'en though in heat of battle off them rent;
This was a sign that they'd behaved them sadly,
Or that their heads were furnished badly;
So that of such the Council had not one,
Nor to its dignity would injury be done.
Thus all put right, to meet are summoned all selected,
When the dark hours of night begin;
And then, on meal sacks piled within
A dealer's store, assemble the elected.
Each in his place appointed sat,
And lo, among them was, without his tail, a rat!
Observing this, a young Mouse nudged an old
And grey one squatted near,
And said: "By what chance here
Got in a tailless one? He's overbold,
Thus at the law we've made to scoff:

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Let's give our votes, and send him packing off!
Thou knowest how the race that tails want love us not;
And is it likely he to us can be of use
Who could not his own tail from shame keep and abuse?
Through him, shelves, holes, and larder, we're all one ruined lot!"
The old Mouse said: "Of such good reasons I've a dozen
But then, you see, the rat is my first cousin."

VI

DEMYAN'S FISHSOUP

"Well, neighbour, now, you are a brick!
Come, try some more."
"Neighbour, I'm bursting quite."—"No humbug, quick—
One plateful let me pour:
Real fishsoup, see what soup, done to a T."
"But that's my third."—"Hush! here we count no plates nor glasses—
With a good appetite all passes:
Digestion's good for sleep, you see,
'Tis tempting, 'tis a very jelly;
Look at the amber that its surface coats,
Indulge, old chum, unto thy heart's content!
See there, 'tis bream, here sterlet choice that floats
That liver there for thee was meant.
Another spoonful!—Wife, thy reverence make!—
One small one more, and for my sake!"
Thus feasted Demyan once his old friend Neddy;
No time to breathe or talk, kept to it steady.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Down Neddy's face had long been trickling rain,
But, yielding unto fate, his plate he hands again;
And, summoning his strength remaining,
He swallows all.—"Now, that a friend I call,"
Exulting Demyan cries; "why on excuses fall
To spare my cheer? Then once more show your training."
Then hapless Neddy, who
Doted on fish, at this aggression new,
Seizing his coat,
Stick, and capote,
Ran straight and swiftly to his own street door,
And ne'er set foot in Demyan's parlour more.

Good author, happy thou in gift beyond dispute;
But, if thou hast not learned yet to be mute,
Boring unwilling ears to suit
Nor time nor place, be sure—thy verse or prose
More sickening e'en than Demyan's fishsoup grows.

VII

THE PEASANTS AND THE RIVER

Some Peasants, out of patience getting
With all the evils them besetting,
From swollen brook and rivulet
Each time that high the waters rose,
Resolve the Stream for justice to beset
Into whose tide each raging feeder flows,

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

And cause enough their plea should count!
Here fields of torn-up corn,
There broken mill-planks hurriedly are borne,
And cattle drowned, unknown the dread amount!
While gently runs the Stream, to grandest size enlarged.
His waves the walls of mighty cities wet,
But never yet
With such mad tricks hath he been charged:
So, surely he'll this ruin stay,
The Peasants argue, ready with their thanks.
But, when they came unto the River's banks,
They floating saw their goods and planks,
The half of all their wealth, upon him borne away.
Then, pains and profit knowing how to weigh,
The Peasants but of one good look had need;
Each in his neighbour's face had read,
And, shaking every one his head,
Off, home to bed
They went, and thus agreed:
"Let us not lose our time again!
Against inferiors to plead is always vain,
Where the superior thief gets half the gain."

VIII

THE SWAN, THE PIKE, AND THE CRAB

When partners with each other don't agree,
Each project must a failure be,
And out of it no profit come, but sheer vexation.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

A Swan, a Pike and Crab once took their station
In harness, and would drag a loaded cart;
But, when the moment came for them to start,
They sweat, they strain, and yet the cart stands still;
what's lacking?
The load must, as it seemed, have been but light;
The Swan, though, to the clouds takes flight,
The Pike into the water pulls, the Crab keeps backing.
Now which of them was right, which wrong, concerns
us not:
The cart is still upon the selfsame spot.

IX

THE SIGHTSEER

"Good day, old friend, and where have you now been?"
"To the fair, and there the show three hours I've seen;
I went o'er all, inspected all, and come—
Canst thou believe it?—home from wonder dumb:
Language can tell thee not
The miracles of that enchanted spot!
Nature's inventions all in one strange lot!
What birds fly there, and oh! what wild beasts roar!
What butterflies, what beetles rare,
What flies, what mites of insects there!
A coat of emerald some, others of coral wore!
What ladybirds minute and red!
Some, I declare, smaller than a pin's head!"

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

"Didst see the elephant? Does not his look impress?
I take it thou didst think him mountains tall."
"What, is he there?"—"Of course."—"Old fellow,
I confess,
I noticed not the elephant at all."

X

THE CASK

A man called once upon a friend, to ask
That he would lend for several days a Cask,
A service which a friend could scarce deny.
Had it been money, now, he borrowed, why,
His friend might easily have said him no,
Friendship and money together seldom go;
But lend a Cask, 'twas such a trifling thing!
Soon to its owner back the Cask they bring,
And he pours water into it as before.
Thus all had ended well,
Only the Cask had been, as told the smell,
For three days holding spirits in a store:
All that they put into 't a flavour catches;
The beer is spoiled, the wine bad whiskey matches
And dry goods get a most unpleasant taste.
The owner's not in haste,
For many a day
The Cask he knocks about:
He steams it, airs it, but the smell won't out,
And so at last he throws the Cask away.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Think of this fable, ye who parents are,
And so bring up your children, that no bar
In life spring from their youth directed ill!
For that once stained, whate'er the lips proclaim,
In every act, beneath the seeming aim,
A mind perverted is apparent still.

XI

APELLES AND THE YOUNG ASS

He, that of self-love more hath than his share
Is pleased with self for that at which all others stare;
And oft it happens, that we hear him boast
Of what he ought to blush for most.

Apelles, meeting with an Ass
Still young, invited him to be his guest;
The Ass, too pleased to think of rest,
Boasting aloud through all the woods doth pass,
And tells the beasts: "Apelles is a bore;
Tormented I will be no more;
Each time we meet he presses me to call.
It seems to me, my friends, that all
He wants is, from me Pegasus to draw."
"No," said Apelles, chancing to be there,
"The famous cause of Midas was my care;
In thee a model for his ears I saw:
And, if thou'lt call again, I glad shall be.
Though I have met with many long-eared asses,
Such length of ear as that on thee
All asses, young or old, by far surpasses."

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

XII

THE WOLVES AND THE SHEEP

The Wolves once harassed so the Sheep,
That life to them unbearable became.
The rulers of the beasts at last, to keep
The Sheep from tyranny, announce their gracious aim;
And to that end a High Commission name.
'Tis true, the members Wolves were for the most;
But then, not every Wolf hath evil fame.
There have been Wolves, and many too, they boast
—Examples of it are not yet forgot—
That by a sheepfold mildly passed, when they
Hungry were not.
Then, why should Wolves not to Committees find their way?
Although, of course, Sheep must be well protected
For that Wolves need not be oppressed, neglected
A meeting was appointed in the wood;
They reasoned, argued all they could,
And in the end bethought them of a law,
And here it is without a flaw:
"Whene'er a Wolf doth riot in a fold,
And dares affront a Sheep,
The Sheep shall seize him by the throat, and bold,
Be he of high rank, young or old,
Bring him unto the wood or wold
Where we our Court for instant justice keep."
The law was just, nothing to change or add:
Only I've seen that Sheep—'tis sad!

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Think of this cry is, " Wolves are now kept quiet" —
And so, defendants, plaintiffs in a riot,
In life still dragged off in gore
By Wolves unto the wood, as 'twas of yore.

[*Translated by I. H. Harrison.*]

M. LÉRMONTOV

(1814–1841)

I

THE DEMON

(*Argument :—The Demon falls in love with Tamára, and causes her bridegroom, riding to the wedding, to be killed by brigands. Tamára enters a convent, whither the Demon follows her. He overcomes her, but her soul is saved.*)

The exiled Demon, Spirit of Despair,
Was flying o'er earth's sinful climes ;
While in his weary brain rose, dark and bare,
Remembrances of happier times,—
When, pure and holy, in the realms of light
He shone amid God's cherubim ;
When, coursing in its golden tracks at night,
The fleeting Comet ever would delight
To interchange a smile with him ;
When, through the circling ether's vast extent,
Thirsting some knowledge to achieve,
He watch'd the movements of the firmament,
And all its wonders could perceive ;
When he could love and still believe,

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

First of creation, happy and devout,
Guiltless of sin and ignorant of doubt;
Nor had his tranquil mind beset
A range of fruitless centuries past in ill—
His brain could hold no more—and yet
The past, the lost came crowding still!

Long—homeless and irresolute—
Roam'd o'er the desert earth the proud outcast,
While, as a minute tracks a minute,
So roll'd the ceaseless centuries past,
Unvarying in their endless stream.
O'er the vile earth he ruled supreme,
Sowing in apathy sin's fatal seeds;
No being there could check his whim,
Or bid defiance to his wicked deeds;
And sin began to weary him.

When downwards he his course inclining
Discerns the Caucasus below.
Behold! Kazbék, like a diamond shining,
Beams in its wealth of endless snow,
And far beneath, in winding banks' embrace,
As in a cleft where serpents breed their race,
The waters of the Darial flow;
And Terek, tossing foam amid his rocks,
As lions shake their shaggy manes,
Majestic thunders on, and feather'd flocks,
Hov'ring aloft amid the azure plains,
Hark to the words the waters echo forth;
And from the south the golden clouds,

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Wafted along in fleecy crowds,
Escort him on his passage north;
While sullen crags, in ever low'ring group,
The eddies and the surge among,
Drowsily nodding, o'er the waters stoop
To watch the waves that creep along;
And castle towers upon the rocks on high,
Frowning athwart the rising mists,
As guards the mountain gateways fortify:
Dumb giant-limb'd antagonists!
Thus wild and wonderful around
Lay all the world; but with profound
Disdain did the imperious Spirit now
His glance o'er God's creation spread,
Whilst on the surface of his lofty brow
No sign of interest could be read. . . .

Within a broadly-based court-yard
Had grey-hair'd Goudal raised his castle walls.
What tears it cost to build those sumptuous halls!
How long the slaves had labour'd hard!
From morn upon the mountain sward
In silence fell the ramparts' low'ring shade—
There in the rock had winding steps been made,
Descending from the castle flank,
Whence, tripping joyfully across the dale,
Tamára, heedless of her stately rank,
And hid in beauty by a snow-white veil,
Sought water at Aragva's bank. . . .

He saw her!—For a moment in his breast
Awakes a pang; then, through his mind distress'd,

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

A strange and wondrous transport thrills;
A rapturous sound from heavenly source
The desert of his bosom fills;
And now again he's conscious of the force
Of beauty, godliness, and love.
Long in bewilderment he stays to view
The scene,—and as at night above
Star follows star from out the veil of blue,
So visions sweep across his mind
Of joys in Heaven long left behind;
And, chain'd by hidden power, he vainly seeks
To quell this new despondency.
But lo! within, a sudden feeling speaks
In tones of bygone purity:
Is it regeneration?—all the sweet
Skilled speeches for seduction requisite
Are dumb—nay, have his thoughts grown dim?
Has he forgotten them?—No, to forget
The power God never gave to him;
Nor, had He, would he have accepted it! . . .

Burying the rowels in his steed
And hastening with impatient speed,
At sunset to the feast the Bridegroom rides.
Already has he reached the rocky sides
That belt Aragva's limpid stream;
Behind him, through the branches gleam
The camels, following in their glittering gear,
As labouring on, with presents bound.
And bells that through the air resound,
They now are hid and now again appear. . . .

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

But look! in front across the roadway flit
Gaunt forms; and see! the frowning trees emit
A flash—Who's there? no voice replies—
The shadows only darker rise.
Drawing his bonnet o'er his brow
The prince, firm on his saddle now,
Gazes in silence round, yet flinches not.
Then, gun in hand, he spurs his steed—
The whip-thong rings—with eagle speed
He dashes on. But hark! another shot
Echoes the lonely vale along,
And then a shout, a stifled groan—
The combat had not lasted long:
The craven Georgians all had flown. . . .

As hastes the fleeting forest stag
O'er shrub and bush, past rock and crag,
The courser speeds along—then, stopping short,
His ears drink in the breeze, and fears distort
His wildly gleaming bloodshot eyes;
With sharply-ringing hoof he paws the ground,
While now, in heighten'd terror glancing round,
He once more madly onward flies.
Bent o'er his mane his rider lies;
The stirrups hold his feet; from side to side
His body reeling, nerveless, sways.
Behold, the reins his hands no longer guide,
And o'er the saddle-cloth in patches wide
A crimson blood-stream trickling strays.
Oh! bravely had the famous charger sped
Like lightning from the raging fight,

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

And yet the Ossetine's relentless lead
Had reached his master through the night.

And grief and sorrow were in Goudal's halls,
And in the court a gathering great :—
What foaming steed is this that staggering falls
Upon the flagstones at the gate ?
Whose is the corpse so lately full of life ?
And why that fiery glance betokening strife,—
That furrowed brow with signs of pain ?
His cloak is deeply stain'd with gore,
And see ! one hand, never to open more,
Has stiffen'd fast upon the mane.
Nay, come, sweet bride, thou need'st no longer gaze ;
Thy tryst has not been long deferr'd ;
See, who is this beneath the porch they raise ?—
Thy prince has kept his bridegroom word.

. . . . . .

And now, within their drear and lone retreat,
The nuns received their hapless guest ;
With holy cloistral garb, in custom meet,
They purely clothed her virgin breast.
Yet, lawless still, beneath this hallow'd dress,
Wild thoughts were raging as before ;
Her mad despair, her passion, were not less
Than when she jewell'd corsets wore.
As, loudly pealing, joyful songs divine
Rang forth in every accent clear,
When all were bent in fervour at the shrine,
The same strange murmurings reach'd her ear ;
And then sometimes across the vaulted space,

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

While rose the incense at the mass,
Hovering above, a form would pass
That woke no sound, that left behind no trace,
But, softly, like a star-enticing ray,
It seem'd to lure her, beckon her away. . . .

O'er Georgia's crests the night-enshrouding dew
Already lay, when through the air
Stealing, the Demon to the convent flew,
As he was wont, to wander there.
But long, oh! long, he did not dare
To break that holy cloister's calm repose,
And for a moment in his breast arose
A sense of shame, as 'twere to stay
His cruel scheme. Pensive the walls around
He roam'd, and at his touch, along the ground,
Trembling, the leaves would shrink away;
While now aloft he rais'd his glance to where
A lamplight from the window shone.
Still wakeful was Tamára watching there,
Though fading daylight now had gone.
And hark! the nightly calm upon
The tender music of the cithern broke,
And softer even still a sweet voice spoke.
Oh! 'twas unto his raptured ears
As though those notes were dropping tears,
As if in heaven, by holy aid,
For earth that song were surely made.
Oh! could that be a former mate
Who pitied him, who mourn'd his fate,
And now was singing of the joyful past?

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

For the first time the Demon felt at last
The tender force of grief and love:
He strove to hasten from the spot, aghast—
His drooping wings refused to move!
And, wonder! out that lurid lid
A heavy teardrop softly slid.
Yes, till this day amid the ivy green,
That clusters near that lonesome cell,
The scalding mark upon a stone is seen
Where that unearthly teardrop fell. . . .

TAMÁRA: Oh! who art thou? thy words are strangely wild.
Who sent thee here? What would'st thou seek?
Art thou of Heaven or Hell?
DEMON: Thou lovely child!
TAMÁRA: But who art thou? Oh! answer—speak!
DEMON: I am that voice that thou hast heard at night
Amid the moonlight's silvery beams;
I am He whose whisp'rings roused a strange delight,
Whose grief and sorrow thou hast guess'd aright,
Whose features thou hast seen in dreams;
I am He whose glance will wither hope before
Its flowers their earliest leaves unroll;
I am He whom, no one loving, all abhor,
Accursed by every living soul.
I rule o'er Science; as Freedom's king I reign;
Ages and space are naught to me;
I am that ill my earthly slaves sustain;
I am Heaven's eternal foe, am Nature's bane;—

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

And yet, behold—I kneel to thee.
To thee, beloved, with contrite heart I bear
The secret love of endless years;
To thee I bring my earliest-utter'd prayer,
My hallow'd grief, my first-shed tears.
Oh! hear me, sweet one, pity my despair!
One look of hope, one word from thee
Would give me Heaven, for in thy love array'd—
A sacred radiance that can never fade,—
Could angels so not welcome me?
Oh! hear me. Since that joyful hour
I saw thee first in all thy maiden state,
I grew quite changed; I even seem'd to hate
My immortality, my power.
And then, unconsciously, I would complain
That earthly pleasures were not mine.
To live a life unlike thee gave me pain;
I long'd to merge my life in thine.
Upon my bloodless heart a brighter ray
Would sometimes through the darkness break;
While yet that wound wherein my sorrow lay
Would rankle like a venom'd snake.
Without thee, what is my eternity,
My fief of endless realms untrod?
But empty sounding words, devoid of thee!—
A gorgeous temple with no God!

TAMÁRA: Oh! leave me, leave me, demon that thou art!

Silence, thy looks thy life betray.
O God!—Alas, I dare not pray;
Some venom rages in my feeble heart.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

What mean these fever'd thoughts, this wild desire?
Thy fatal love too well I know;
Thy glance is death, thy words are poison—fire.
But tell me why thou lov'st me so?

DEMON: Why? lovely one! Alas, I scarce can say,
Save that a change my life came o'er,
When, seeing thee, the wreath of thorns away
From off my sinful brow I tore.
Then, forthwith breaking with the awful past,
I felt new joy within me rise;
My lofty pride had reach'd its term at last;
My heaven, my hell were in thine eyes!
I love thee, oh! I love thee, not as thou
Could'st ever love, or man love thee:
But wildly, as, behold, I love thee now
With all my immortality. . . .

TAMÁRA: We may be heard.

DEMON: We are alone!

TAMÁRA: And God?

DEMON: His glance on us shall never dwell.
His realm is Heaven, He scarce can spare
For earth a thought.

TAMÁRA: His sentence? oh! and Hell?

DEMON: Tamára, shall not I be there? . . .

And now unto his breast
He clasp'd her trembling form, and wildly press'd
His burning lips to hers. The tender prayer
That sought her quivering mouth was stifled there;
His eyes met hers in all their might—
They burnt her—Oh! athwart the night

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Shunless he glittered as a hovering blade.
The Evil One had overcome the maid.
Hark! cleaving to the silent sky,
There burst a wild, an aching cry—
In it was all!—reproach, love, passion, fear,
The first-felt disbelief in truth,
A last farewell to all on earth most dear,
Farewell to Innocence and Youth. . . .

Calm as a sleeping Peri, and as sweet,
Tamára in her coffin lay;
Her brow as pallid as the winding-sheet,
Her eyelids closed, their orbs no more to greet
Or shine upon another day.
Yet who, beholding, would not say
They were but slumbering, or in sooth, lovelorn,
Awaiting but a lover's kiss—or morn?
But ah! in vain did fair Aurora's rays
Caress them through the golden mist;
In vain, with silent grief, for many days
Those lips her friends and kinsfolk kiss'd.
No wak'ning ever came. . . .

Lo! soaring through the azure plains of space,
Tamára's erring soul in his embrace,
From earth a holy Angel flew.
Gently, as nearer Heaven they drew,
He sought with words of comfort to allay
Her doubt and give her mind relief,
While with her contrite tears he wash'd away
The trace of former guilt and grief.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Already music from the realms of bliss
Could now be heard in rising swell,
When—Ah! what awful majesty is this
That rises threat'ning from the vast abyss?
It is the ghastly prince of Hell!—
He came as mighty as the sweeping gale;
He shone as lightning flashes shine;
He struck across their course, unearthly pale,
He proudly thunder'd, "She is mine!"
What terror through the gentle spirit thrill'd,
As, on the Angel's bosom bent,
A prayer to Heaven for aid she sent—
Her future fate was now to be fulfill'd.
Once more before her now he stood
In all his power; but, Heaven! who would
Have known him now? A horror overcame
All space, so deadly was his glance of flame,
So full of enmity and ill;
Whilst from his swarthy face there came
As from the grave a vapour chill.

"Avaunt!" the Messenger of Heaven replied,
"Avaunt! grim potentate of Hell.
Enough thou hast all sovereignty defied,
Thy power has had sufficient spell.
No longer is thy victim clothed in clay,
Her chains of sin have all been cast away;
The hour of pain and trial is past.
Praise, glory, gratitude to God! The day
For judgment has arrived at last.
Know that the Grace of Heaven is vast;

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Know that no power can cope with this!
Her tender soul was one of those whose life
Is but one moment of heartrending strife,
Of longed for, but untasted bliss.
God from the purest ether gave them birth,
He formed them as the rarest gem.
Oh, no! They were not ever made for earth,
Nor was earth ever made for them.
Avaunt! Though dear thy victim purchased grace,
Yet hark! they wait for her above.
She lived, she grieved, she loved—and Heaven's embrace
Is open to the child of love!"

Thus saying, on the tempter's face he sent
A shaft of stern and dazzling light,
And, fast his arms around the maiden bent,
Soar'd onward in his heavenward flight;
While wrath uncheck'd and passion vehement
Came o'er the baffled Demon's face,
And he again as formerly was left,
Of hope, of love, of paradise bereft,
Unpitied and alone in space!

[*Translated by A. C. Stephen.*]

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

II

THE DUEL

Preface

A short time ago, I learnt that Petchórin had died on his return from Persia. I felt highly satisfied at the tidings, which gave me the right to publish this Memoir, and I gladly avail myself of the opportunity to prefix my name to the work of another. May my readers not condemn me for it.

I now must explain my reasons for submitting to the public the most intimate secrets of a man whom I have never known. If I had been but his friend, the cowardly indiscretion of genuine friends is sufficiently known to all the world; however, I have only seen him once in my life, and then, moreover, on a journey. It is therefore obvious that I cannot entertain that inexplicable hatred against him which hides itself under the mask of friendship, and waits for the moment of death, or of great misfortunes, to pour showers of reproaches, of advice, pity and scorn, on the head of the beloved friend.

Perusing these Memoirs, I became convinced of the sincerity of him who so mercilessly exposes his own weaknesses and wrongdoings. The history of the human mind, even were it of the humblest man, is more interesting and useful than the history of a whole nation, especially if it is the result of the observation of the mind on itself, and if it has been written without the vain desire of arousing sympathy or admiration. The

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Confessions of Rousseau have the disadvantage that he read them to his friends.

I have simply been led by the desire to prove useful in publishing this diary, which by chance fell into my hands. Though I have altered all the names, yet those who are depicted will have no difficulty in recognising their own selves,[1] and they will, perhaps, find the key here to the behaviour of a man who has no longer anything in common with them in this world. In this book I have only inscribed that which refers to Petchórin's stay in the Caucasus. There yet remains in my possession a bulky manuscript, in which he describes his whole life. Sooner or later this too shall be surrendered to the public, but for many reasons, I do not yet venture to assume the responsibility.

Perhaps some readers wish to know my own estimate of Petchórin's character? My answer is in the title of this book, viz., "A Hero of Our Time." "But this is bitter irony!" they exclaim. I do not know.

. . . . . .

(The following is a passage from Petchorin's Memoirs. Grushnitzki challenges Petchorin, his rival in a love affair, to a duel. The latter overhears a plot, by which only Grushnitzki's pistol is to be properly loaded. His second now returns from a conference.)

[1] Lêrmontov's prediction was fulfilled. A certain Martynov recognised himself in one of the characters of this novel, and challenged the author to a duel, which took place on the narrow plateau of a steep rock in the Caucasus. Lérmontov was killed and his corpse fell down into an abyss.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

"At that moment I entered," said the doctor. "All suddenly became silent. Our negotiations lasted for some time; at last we came to the following agreement. About five miles from here there is a deep ravine; to-morrow at four o'clock in the morning they will ride there, we follow half an hour later; you shoot at each other at six paces. Grushnitzki himself claims it should be so; if either is killed, the death goes to the account of the Circassians. However, another suspicion has crossed my mind; they, I mean his seconds, may have somewhat altered their former plan, and their present intention probably is to load only Grushnitzki's pistol with a bullet. But this looks quite like murder. In warfare, and especially in an Asiatic campaign, I admit some stratagem; still I think Grushnitzki more honest than his comrades. What do you think? Shall we let them see that we have perceived their designs?"

"By no means, doctor!" said I. "Rest assured I shall not be taken in."

"But what are your intentions?"

"I keep them secret."

"Consider well the danger to which you are exposing yourself—at six paces!"

"Doctor! I shall expect you to-morrow morning at four; the horses will be ready—farewell!"

I remained at home until towards evening. A valet of the Princess came inviting me to come to her. I excused myself on the ground of illness.

It is two o'clock after midnight; I cannot sleep. And yet sleep would invigorate me a little, to guard

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

my hand from trembling to-morrow. However, it is hardly possible to miss the mark at six paces. Beware, Grushnitzki, your mystification shall not succeed—we shall exchange our parts; now it is my turn to watch the signs of secret fear in your pale countenance. Why have you yourself determined upon the fatal six paces? Do you suppose that I shall put myself into your hands without any ceremony whatever?—no, we shall cast lots! and then—then—but how if Fortune should favour him, and my star at last should abandon me! Ay, how easily might this be the case! has she not already long enough served my changeful fancies?

But what if I die?—die thus? In truth it would not be a great loss to the world, of which I already feel tired enough. I am like a person at a ball, who is yawning, but yet does not go to bed, because his carriage has not yet arrived. Now the carriage is come—Adieu!

I recapitulate my whole past life, and ask involuntarily, Why have I lived? To what end have I been born? Probably some destiny existed for me; nay, probably an exalted one; for I feel immeasurable powers within my soul. Only, I have not guessed that destiny, but have allowed myself to be carried away by the allurements of shallow, thankless passions; from their furnace I came forth hard and cold as steel, but I had likewise spent every noble aspiration, the most beautiful blossom of life. And how often since have I not acted the part of the axe in the hands of Fate! Like the tool of the executioner I fell on the neck of the doomed victim, often without malice, always without sympathy. My love has never conferred

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

happiness, because I never sacrificed anything to those whom I loved. I loved but for my own sake, for my own gratification; I only satisfied the strange craving of my own heart, and greedily imbibed their feelings, their tenderness, their joys, their sufferings; yet I never could be satiated. Thus a man tortured by hunger, whom exhaustion has lulled into sleep, sees the richest food and the most sparkling wines in his dreams. With delight he partakes of the airy dainties created by his imagination, and feels relieved; but hardly has he woke again than his phantasm disappears and nothing remains to him but double hunger and double despair!

To-morrow perhaps I may die—and there is not one being on earth who has wholly understood me. Some think me worse, others better, than I really am. Some say, he was a good fellow; others, he was a detestable man. And the one is as false as the other. And after all, is it worth one's while to live? And still one lives, for the sake of curiosity; we always expect something new. It is ridiculous and sad.

. . . . . .

At the foot of the rock, in the thicket, three horses stood fastened; we fastened our horses likewise, and ascended the narrow path to the open spot where we were expected by Grushnitzki, the captain of dragoons, and another second, whom they called Ivan; I never heard his surname.

"We have waited for you a long time," began the captain, with an ironical smile.

I drew forth my watch and showed it him.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

He excused himself, saying that his watch was faster.

For several minutes there reigned an oppressive silence. At last it was interrupted by the doctor who turned to Grushnitzki with the words—

"It seems to me," said he, "as I see you both ready to fight and thus to discharge your debt to the claims of honour, that you might just as well compromise the matter in a conciliatory way."

"I am ready to do so," said I.

The captain nodded to Grushnitzki, who, supposing that my courage was failing, assumed a proud mien, though a deadly pallor had covered his face. He now glanced at me for the first time since our arrival. In his eye there was a certain restlessness, which betrayed the struggle of his mind. "Name your condition," said he, "and whatever I can do for you, I shall, certainly."

"My condition is, that you publicly revoke your calumny this very day, and that you then apologise."

"Sir—I am astonished! How do you dare to expect such conduct from me?"

"And what else could I claim from you?"

"Then our pistols will decide."

I shrugged my shoulders. "As you please; yet consider well—one of us must fall in any case."

"I hope it may be you."

"And I am convinced of the contrary."

He was perplexed; coloured, and replied with a forced laugh.

The captain took his arm, and led him aside; they

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

whispered for a long while. I had arrived in a rather peaceable mood, but now I began to get into a passion.

The doctor came up to me.

"Hark!" said he, with obvious anxiety. "You seem to have forgotten their conspiracy? I shall not be allowed to load the pistol—but, in such a case!—You are a strange man. Do tell them downright that you know their intentions, and they will leave off laughing. What an idea, to allow oneself to be shot like a bird!"

"Do me the favour, dear doctor, not to worry, but to let things proceed quietly. I shall arrange that on their side there shall not be the slightest advantage; let them whisper.—Gentlemen, this begins to grow wearisome," said I, aloud. "Are we to fight, or not? You had time enough yesterday for concerting."

"We are ready," replied the captain.

"Take your positions, gentlemen. Doctor, be pleased to measure six paces."

"Take your positions," repeated Ivan, with a shrill voice.

"Excuse me," said I. "One condition more! As we are about to fight to the death, it is our duty to do all we can that this may remain secret, and that our seconds may not be made responsible. Do you concur in this?"

"We fully concur."

"Well, then, listen to my proposal. Do you perceive that narrow spot to the right, which is open to the steep of this perpendicular rock? From there, down the abyss, it is at least two hundred feet;

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

below the precipice there are pointed stones. Each of us must step to the very brink; in this way, even a light wound must become mortal; this, of course, is likewise in accordance with your views, as you yourself have determined upon six paces' distance. Whoever is wounded necessarily falls into the abyss, and cannot survive. The doctor extracts the ball from the corpse, and there will then be no difficulty in explaining the sudden death as the accident of a fall. We shall cast lots to decide who is first to shoot. I have further to observe that I will not fight under any other conditions."

"As you please," replied the captain, significantly glancing at Grushnitzki, who nodded in acquiescence. His countenance, nevertheless, fell every moment. I had put him in a difficult position. If we had fought under the usual conditions, he could aim at my legs, wound me lightly, and thus satisfy his revenge without overburdening his conscience; but now he had either to shoot in the air, or to become a murderer; or to relinquish his base purpose, and expose himself to equal danger with myself. At that moment I should not have liked to be in his place. He took the captain and began an animated discussion with him. I saw his discoloured lips tremble; but the captain turned from him with a smile of content.

"You are a fool!" said he to Grushnitzki, half aloud. "You do not understand anything. Let us start, gentlemen."

A narrow path led through bushes to the cliff. Fragments of rocks formed the wavering steps of the staircase framed by nature. We clung fast to the bushes, and

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

climbed up. Grushnitzki preceded; behind him his seconds; then we followed, the doctor and I.

"I admire you!" exclaimed the doctor, pressing my hand. "Let me feel your pulse! Oh! it is feverish. But on your face nothing is to be traced. Only your eyes glisten brighter than usual."

Suddenly some small stones fell noisily on our feet. What was this? Grushnitzki had stumbled; the branch to which he had clung had given way, and he would have tumbled down backwards had his seconds not supported him.

"Take care!" shouted I to him. "Do not fall too soon. This is an evil omen. Remember Julius Caesar!"

At last we reached the height of the projecting rock; the small platform was covered with moist sand, as if indeed prepared for a duel. All round, like a numberless flock, lay mountain summits, in the golden morning mist. Southward rose Elbruz, with its white masses, closing the chain of glaciers, among which wandered already streaks of clouds approaching from the east. I stepped forward to the brink of the plateau and looked into the depths. My head was almost seized with giddiness; there below it seemed dark and cold as the grave; moss-covered peaks, hurled down by time and storm, were ready for their prey.

The spot on which we were to fight formed almost a right-angled triangle. From the principal angle six paces were measured, and it was decided that he whose lot it would be first to face the fire should stand with his back turned to the precipice; if he were not shot, then the parties were to change places.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

I determined to let Grushnitzki have every advantage. I wished to test him; one spark of generosity might yet be awakened in his soul, and then everything might be turned to a good end; but his vanity and weakness of character were to prove preponderant. I desired to get the full right not to spare him, in case Fate should be favourable to me. Who would not have made similar conditions with his conscience?

"Cast the lot, doctor," said the captain.

The doctor drew a silver coin from his pocket, and held it up.

"Tails!" shouted Grushnitzki quickly, like a man suddenly brought to his senses by an electric shock.

"Heads!" said I.

The coin was thrown up and fell tinkling down; we all rushed to it.

"You are the lucky man," said I to Grushnitzki; "it is your turn to shoot first. But do not forget that if you do not kill me, I certainly shall not miss you. I pledge you my word."

He blushed; he still felt ashamed to kill a defenceless man. I sharply faced him; for one moment I fancied that he felt inclined to prostrate himself at my feet and entreat my pardon; but how could he confess such base intentions? One means was left to him—to fire in the air; I was convinced that he would do it. One thing only could prevent his doing so: the thought that I might insist on renewing the duel.

"Now is the time," whispered the doctor to me, pulling my sleeve; "if you now do not say that we know their intentions, everything is lost. Look, he

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

is loading already ; if you do not speak, I shall myself."

" Not for the world, doctor ! " I objected, holding him back by the arm ; " you will ruin all, though you have pledged yourself not to meddle. This is none of your business ; perhaps I wish to be shot."

He looked at me with astonishment.

" Oh ! this is different. Only don't complain of me in the next world."

The captain meanwhile had loaded the pistols, and whispering something with a smile to Grushnitzki, he gave him one, the other to me.

I took my position at the border of the precipice, firmly leaning with my left foot on a stone, and bending a little forward, so that in case of a slight wound, I might not immediately fall backwards. Grushnitzki stood opposite to me, and on a given sign he began to take aim. His knees trembled. He aimed precisely at my forehead.

Inexpressible rage began to heave my breast.

Suddenly he dropped the barrel of his pistol a little, and, pale as death, turning to his second he said, with a hollow voice, " I cannot."

" Coward ! " replied the captain.

The shot was fired ; the ball grazed my foot. I involuntarily stepped a few paces forward, to withdraw more quickly from the precipice.

" Well, friend Grushnitzki, it is a pity you have missed," said the captain. " Now it is your turn ; take your position. Embrace me first, we probably shall see one another no more." They embraced each other ; the captain could hardly help laughing.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

"Never fear," he added, his eye twinkling cunningly, "after all, everything in this world is folly: 'Nature, a fool; fate, an old hen; and life not worth a straw.'"

After having delivered this tragic phrase with due importance, he retreated. Ivan now likewise embraced Grushnitzki, who at last stood alone opposed to me. To this day I strive clearly to understand the feeling which then roused my passion; it was partly the passion of insulted vanity, partly contempt and anger, begotten by the thought that the man who now stood before me with such careless impudence, but two moments ago was willing to kill me like a dog, without exposing himself to the slightest danger; for, if my foot had chanced to be wounded a little more seriously, I should have fallen inevitably from the rock.

For some moments I eyed him piercingly, to discover some slight trace of remorse; but it appeared to me as if he repressed a smile.

"I advise you before you die to recommend your soul to God," said I at last.

"Do not care for my soul more than you care for your own; I entreat only one thing: make it short."

"Then you will not retract your calumnies? You do not apologise? Consider well; does your conscience not smite you?"

"Mr. Petchorin," exclaimed the captain of dragoons, "allow me to observe that you are not here to sermonise. Let us put an end to the matter; how easily might not somebody pass by this ravine and perceive us?"

"Please, doctor, come here."

The doctor approached; poor man, he was paler

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

than Grushnitzki had been a few moments ago. The following words I purposely spoke with emphasis, loudly and distinctly, as one pronounces a sentence of death—

"Doctor, these gentlemen, probably in their haste forgot to load my pistol with a bullet; please load it again—and properly."

"This cannot be!" the captain cried; "this cannot be! I have loaded both pistols; should the bullet have rolled out of your pistol, it is not my fault. You have no right to load again—not the slightest right; this is quite against the rules. I shall never consent."

"Well," said I to the captain, "in this case I shall fight with you upon the same conditions."

He grew perplexed.

Grushnitzki stood with his head sunk on his breast, stunned and sullen. "Let them alone," said he at last to the captain, who was about to wrench my pistol from the hands of the doctor; "you know yourself that they are right."

The captain in vain made signs to him: Grushnitzki would not see.

Meanwhile the doctor had loaded the pistol and handed it to me.

When the captain saw this, he spat on the ground, and stamped with his foot. "You are a fool, my dear fellow," he burst out, "a miserable fool; putting yourself into my hands, you ought to obey me in every way. Now you have only yourself to blame if you must die like a fly." He turned round, and while

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

he retreated, grumbled, "But this is against all the rules."

"Grushnitzki," said I, "there is time yet; retract your calumnies, and I forgive you everything. You have not succeeded in making a fool of me, and my self-esteem is satisfied; remember that we once were friends."

His face glowed, his eyes sparkled.

"Shoot!" he replied, "I despise myself, and you I hate. If you do not kill me, I shall murder you. There is not room for both of us in this world."

I fired.

When the smoke had dispersed, Grushnitzki was no longer there. Dust alone still whirled up in a thin column at the border of the precipice.

All shrieked together, like one voice.

"Finita è la commedia!" said I to the doctor.

He did not answer, and turned away with horror.

I shrugged my shoulders, and bowed to Grushnitzki's seconds.

[*From A HERO OF OUR TIME. Translated by T. Pulszky.*]

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft®

N NEKRÁSOV

(1821–1877)

I

WHEN AS I HEAR THE WOES OF STRIFE

WHENAS I hear the woes of strife,
Of victims new on battle plain,
I do not wail the friend, the wife,
I do not wail the hero slain.
Alas! the wife consoles her soon;
The best of friends forgets his friend;
But somewhere is that soul alone
Who will remember to the end!
Amidst all our vulgarity
And our hypocrisy and prose,
Alone in all the world I see
Sincere and holy tears are those—
The tears that wretched mothers shed!
'Tis not for them e'er to forget
Their sons, on bloody meadows dead—
As never weeping willow yet
Could raise on high its downcast head.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

II

A PRIEST QUESTIONED BY PEASANTS

" I give you, friends, my faithful word
Whatever you may question, I
Without a joke, without deceit,
In truth and reason shall reply
Amen ! "

" Our thanks ! Hear what we say.
As we came down the long highway
We met together, as you see ;
We met and quarrelled. This is how—
Who lives in mighty Russia now
Quite happy and quite free ?
' The big landowner,' says Román,
And ' The official,' says Demyán,
But I say, ' No, the priest ! '
' The rich, fat-bellied business-man,'
Say both the brothers Gubini,
Iván and Mitridor.
Pahóm says, ' The illustrious
And great all-powerful boyár,'
And Prov says loud, ' The Tsar.'
We peasants are just like a bull—
Whatever stuff gets in our skull,
A goad can't hook it out.
We quarrelled and began to shout,
And shouting, we began to swear,
And swearing, we began to fight,
And fighting, we decided so :

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

That none of us would go away
To see his children or his wife
Or parents old, until we know
The final answer to our strife.
Until we know assuredly,
And properly and finally,
Who lives in mighty Russia now
Quite happy and quite free.
Then tell us, like a man of God,—
The priest's life, is it sweet or no?
How do you live? Quite happy? Free?
Oh, tell us, honour'd sir."

Upon his cart the priest sat. There,
Cast down his eyes, to think began,
And said: "Now listen, honest men;
It is a sin to wail at God;
I bear my cross with patience;
I live—but how? Just listen, then,
I'll tell to you the honest truth,
And you with peasant common-sense
Decide it for yourselves."

"Commence!"

"Now, what do you call happiness?—
Repose, good fame and wealth, no less,
Is't not so, friends?"

"It is." [*The priest tells them of his hardships.*]

From WHO LIVES HAPPY IN RUSSIA?
Translated by C. E. Bechhofer.]

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

A. OSTRÓVSKI

(1823–1886)

OLYMPIADA WANTS A HUSBAND

CHARACTERS

Agraphena, *wife of a Moscow merchant.*
Olympiada, *her daughter.*
Period :—*Early nineteenth century.*

OLYMPIADA (*sitting alone*) : What a glorious occupation dancing is ! How delightful ! What could be jollier than to drive to a party or a wedding, sit there quite naturally, all in flowers and dressed up like a doll or a fashion-plate—yes, and all of a sudden a man runs up : " Give me the honour, mademoiselle ! " If he's a man of address or an officer—well, you look at him and answer, " With pleasure ! " Oh, it's de-light-ful ! I simply can't describe it. But if there is a thing I don't like, it's dancing with students or clerks. It's quite another matter with officers. Oh, how lovely ! Divine ! They've got moustaches and epaulettes and uniforms, and some have even got spurs with little bells in 'em. The only horrid thing is, they dance without their swords. Why do they take 'em off ? I'm sure I don't know. They simply don't know how to set themselves off. You

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

ought to see how their spurs jingle, especially if it's a lancer or a colonel—marvellous! It's a treat to watch them! Well, fasten him his sword on; it's the finest thing then you could ever wish to see—louder than thunder and jollier than any music! How can you compare an officer with a civilian! An officer—why, you can tell him at once: his easy ways and all; but what's a civilian?—why, he's a mere stock! (*Pauses.*) I can't understand why so many ladies sit and look on at the dancing. There's *actively* not the least difficulty in learning. Why, look how frightened I was of my teacher; yet in twenty lessons I learned absolutely everything. Why doesn't everybody learn dancing? You only want confidence! Suppose I couldn't dance! Let's imagine I'm engaged to an officer and we've invited friends to announce it to 'em—candles burning everywhere, waiters walking about in white gloves, I, of course, wearing a tulle or a gauze dress; suddenly the band strikes up a waltz! How ashamed I am before him! Oh, how awful! Where can I hide? What will he think? There's a fool, he'll say, and badly brought up!—Ah, no, that would be too awful! That reminds me, I haven't danced now for a year and a half! Let me have a try. (*Waltzing badly.*) One—two—three—one—two—three. (*Her mother enters.*)

AGRAPHENA: I thought so, you shameless girl! I seemed to feel it in my heart—it isn't light yet, you haven't broken bread, and here you are dancing already!

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

OLYMPIADA: Why, mamma dear, I've had some tea and cake. Look, is this all right? One—two—three—one—two——

AGRAPHENA (*following her*): Well, what if you have had tea? Have I got to watch you misbehaving? Stand still, I tell you!

OLYMPIADA: Misbehaving? Why, everybody waltzes nowadays. One—two——

AGRAPHENA: Better knock one's brains out than—— (*Runs after her.*) What's the matter with you? Why are you so disobedient?

OLYMPIADA: Disobedient? Who told you I was disobedient? Don't interrupt me; let me finish properly! One—two—three——

AGRAPHENA: Am I to run about after you in my old age? Ugh! you're torturing me, you barbarian! D'you hear, stop! I'll tell your father!

OLYMPIADA: All right, all right, mamma dear! Last turn! You're always going to tell father! I'm not afraid of you, though! One—two——

AGRAPHENA: What! You're still dancing, and finding fault with me at the same time? Stop it this minute! It'll be the worse for you: I'll catch hold of your skirt and tear the fringe off.

OLYMPIADA: Go on, tear it! You'll only have to sew it on again—that's all! (*Sits down.*) Oh, oh, what a mess I'm in—just as if I'd been pulling a cart about! Ugh! Mamma dear, give me a hankey to wipe my face with.

AGRAPHENA: I'll do it for you. Oh, how tired you are! As if you'd been made to! That's what

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

comes of not honouring your mother. Your poor father can hardly move his legs, and here are you twisting about like a whirligig!

OLYMPIADA: Do stop scolding! What do you want me to do? You want me to be ill, eh? it wouldn't matter if I were married to a doctor!—What a one you are, mamma, you really are! Really. sometimes you make me blush with what you say.

AGRAPHENA: There's an undutiful child! Just see how she honours her mother! Oh, you silly chatterbox! Fancy talking like that about your parents. Is it for this I bore you into the world and taught you, yes, and guarded you like a—like a straw?

OLYMPIADA: You didn't teach me—other people did; so don't say that, please! To tell the truth you yourself are not educated at all. Well, and what if you did? What was I at that time? Why, a baby, a child without understanding! I didn't know what to do! But now that I'm grown up and can look at the world, I see that I'm much more educated than other people. Am I to connive at all your follies? I should think so!

AGRAPHENA: Be quiet, be quiet, you hussy! You'll make me lose my temper! I'll go straight to your father, and throw myself on my knees and I'll tell him, "Samson dear, there's no living with our daughter!"

OLYMPIADA: Oh, there's no living with me, isn't there? D'you think *I* can live? Why did you refuse my sweetheart? Wasn't he good enough? Why did you say he was light-headed?

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

AGRAPHENA: Why, because he was grinning all the time. Here he came and made faces, yes, made faces and twisted about! What a sight!

OLYMPIADA: Oh, you know a lot! Everybody knows that he's a thorough gentleman, and always delicate in his behaviour. They always behave like that in his circle. How dare you find fault with people you can't understand! *He's* not a shop-keeper! (*Mutters.*) The dear, the darling!

AGRAPHENA: Yes, a fine darling! I should just think he was! It's a pity we didn't let the silly donkey marry you! You foolish girl, what stuff and nonsense—muttering like that to annoy your mother!

OLYMPIADA: Any one can see you don't care for my happiness! You and papa are always making up things against me, and tyrannizing!

AGRAPHENA: Well, think what you like, and Heaven judge you! No one ever takes so much thought for her child as the mother's womb! There are you a-bristling and a-tristling, and I and your papa are looking about day and night to find you a good husband and get you off quickly!

OLYMPIADA: It's easy for you to talk; but what good's that to me?

AGRAPHENA: Do you think I'm not sorry for you? What more can I do? We can't find a husband for you at a second's notice, like cats catching mice.

OLYMPIADA: I don't care about your cats! I want a husband! I'm ashamed to meet my friends!

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

You can't find me a husband in all Moscow—but the others have got 'em! Who wouldn't be upset? All my friends have got husbands long ago, but here am I like an orphan! One did turn up, and you sent him away. Look here: find me a husband; you must, you must! I tell you once for all; it'll be all the worse for you—why, just to annoy you, I'll get an admirer; I'll elope with a hussar, yes, and we'll get married secretly!

AGRAPHENA: What, what, you hussy! Where did you learn all these nasty things? Deary me, I can't control myself! There's nothing for it—I must call your father!

OLYMPIADA: You keep on with your "father, father, father"; you're very bold when he's here, but just try to speak to me on your own!

AGRAPHENA: D'you think I'm a fool, or what? You and your hussars—you with your shameless nose! Oh, you devil's temptation! Or d'you think I'm not entitled to command you? Tell me—you with your shameless eyes—what's your jealous look for? D'you want to be superior to your mother? I haven't got much more time; I'm just going to the kitchen to wash the peas. Oh, you—oh—— Oh dear me! I'll make you a dress of sackcloth and hang it round your neck!

OLYMPIADA: What! Am I going to let myself be ordered about? That's new!

AGRAPHENA: Be quiet, be quiet! Give in to your mother! Say another word, and I'll tie your tongue to your heels! You're a comfort, I must say! You're

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

a tomboy; you've nothing womanly in you! Why you're ready to ride a horse like a soldier!

OLYMPIADA: I believe you'll drag in burglars next! You'd much better have said nothing, if you can't be polite! If I'm everything that's not nice, what are you then? What do you want? To send me to the other world before my time? To kill me with your tantrums? (*Weeps.*) Yes, and I'm coughing now, like a fly!

AGRAPHENA (*looking at her*): Never mind; never mind! All right; all right! Listen, I tell you; do stop crying! Never mind; it's all my fault! Do stop; it's all my fault. (*Weeping.*) Deary, deary, never mind! Do stop! Come, don't be angry with me! I'm a silly, ignorant woman! Come, forgive me—I'll buy you a pair of ear-rings.

OLYMPIADA: I don't want your ear-rings; I've got enough of them already. Buy me an emerald bracelet.

AGRAPHENA: I'll buy it, I'll buy it; only do stop crying!

OLYMPIADA: I'll stop crying when I get married.

AGRAPHENA: You shall be married, darling, you shall! Come, give me a kiss! (*They kiss.*) There, that's all right! Come, let me wipe your tears away. Martha's coming to see me to-day; I'll talk to her about you.

OLYMPIADA: Ah!—if only she comes quick!

[*ONE OF OURSELVES. Act I, Scene* 1. *Translated by C. E. Bechhofer.*]

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

K. POBYÈDONOSTSEV

(1827–1907)

MAN IS NOT THE CENTRE

The ancients, we are told, were accustomed to place a skeleton or a skull in the midst of their banquet halls that they might be reminded of the proximity of death. This custom has decayed: we feast and make merry and strive to banish all thoughts of death. Nevertheless, at the back of each stands death, and his threatening face at any moment may appear before us.

Every morning brings news of suicides, those suicides unexplained and inexplicable, which threaten to become a familiar feature of our lives. It is terrible to think that some day we may become accustomed to this feature. Never has there been a time when the human soul was valued at so low a price, when there reigned such indifference to the fate of men created in the image of God and redeemed by the blood of Christ. Rich and poor, learned and ignorant, age and youth which has hardly begun life, nay, the very tottering infant, throw away their lives with inconceivable recklessness;

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

some without a word, others in their last moments extolling to the world themselves and their deed.

What is the cause? That life has become deformed, false, and meaningless beyond belief, that order has disappeared, that all rational sequence in human development has vanished, that all discipline of thought, of sentiment, and of morals has disappeared. Corruption and disintegration have destroyed the simple, organic relations of public and family life; their place has been usurped by institutions and abstract principles for the most part false in themselves, or in false relations to life and actuality. The simple needs of the soul and body have been expelled by a multitude of artificial requirements, and the simplest sentiments have given way to sentiments complex and artificial, which seduce and irritate the soul. Vanity, which once grew commensurately with our environment and conditions, has suddenly been magnified to the immensity of the human ego, which violates all discipline and usurps an absolute dominion over life, liberty, and happiness, claiming to rule alike over circumstance and fate. The minds of men, strong and weak, high and low, great and small, all alike have lost the faculty of recognising their own ignorance, and the capacity to learn—that is, *to submit to the law of life*; while men exalt themselves to that visionary height from which each, great or small, holds himself as judge of life and of the universe.

Thus has accumulated an infinite mass of falsehoods, pervading all relations, poisoning the atmosphere which we breathe, the medium in which we live and move, the thought that controls the will, the word

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

with which the thought is expressed. Among such falsehoods what can we seek but a feeble growth, a feeble existence, and feeble deeds? The very conception of life and of its aims becomes falsified, our relations are disordered, and life has lost the harmony essential to tranquil development and normal activity Is it strange, then, that so many cannot bear the burden, and lose the balance of moral and intellectual forces essential to life? A crystal vessel heated equably will bear a high temperature, while heated suddenly or inequably it bursts asunder. Is it not thus with those unhappy suicides of whom daily we hear? Some perish from the inherent falsehood of their conceptions of life, which reality shatters in the dust. The miserable man who knows no support in life other than himself, who seeks outside himself no moral principle to sustain him in the struggle, flees from the field, and seeks oblivion in effacement. Others perish from inability to reconcile their exalted ideals of life and action with the falsehoods around them, the falseness of men and the falseness of institutions; these lose faith in their ideals, and having no true faith to console them, they lose their balance, and, as cowards, cast away their lives. Many are ruined by sudden and unmerited success, victims of the power which they coveted so madly, but the burden of which they are unable to bear. For ours is a time of fictitious, artificial greatness and celebrity for the mutual deception of men, and real merit finds it hard to arise and justify itself from obscurity, because in the market of human vanity only glittering money is gold. Men recklessly undertake responsibilities, imagining

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

themselves capable of all things, and with little ability, without great effort, attain the highest positions. The prospect of power is seductive to human vanity: it brings a vision of honours and privileges, of power to bestow favours, and to create other powers. Yet, what ever be the vulgar conception, the moral principle of power is simple and immutable, "Whosoever of you will be the chiefest shall be servant of all." Were this not forgotten, who would seek to bear the unbearable burden? Nevertheless, all men are eager to accept power, and the burden has crushed and ruined many, for in our time the exercise of power is more arduous and complicated than ever. Great is the number of those for whom power, recklessly conferred, and recklessly accepted, becomes a sphinx, and asks its fatal riddle. He who cannot solve it must perish.

If we would reason aright, we must regard the object of our reasoning from the proper point of view; all depends upon this, and all human error proceeds from failure to observe this rule. We are accustomed to trust to our impressions, but impressions are received merely from the surfaces of the objects along which we glide with such remarkable speed and agility. Delighted with our first impression, with human impatience and vanity we hasten to impart it to others. By transmission of our impressions to receptive natures, error is formed, develops, and matures, percolates to the masses, and too often is accepted as the opinion of the public.

This holds true in great matters as well as in small.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Whole systems of astronomy obtained acceptance through the course of centuries, were considered indisputable, yet in the end were proven to be false, being formed from a wrong point of view. Such was the Ptolemaic system. For centuries astronomers persisted in looking at the universe from the earth as the central point of view—the earth seemed so infinitely vast that no other centre could be conceived. The system was full of contradictions and inconsistencies, for the removal of which men of science had recourse to an artificial system of cycles and epicycles. Centuries passed before Copernicus appeared and drew the false centre out of the system. All was plain when once it was shown that the universe did not revolve about the earth, that the earth held no ruling position among the heavenly bodies at all, but was merely one of many planets, controlled by forces in power and importance immensely exceeding its own.

The system of Ptolemy has long outlived its day, yet in our time its errors obtain in a new sphere of ideas and conceptions. For does not modern philosophy, which deals with man as the centre of the universe, assuming that all existence revolves around him as science once made the sun revolve around the earth, fall into a similar pit? It is plain indeed that there is nothing new under the sun. This outworn creed is offered us as a novelty, as the last word of science. Then follow, one after another, contradicions, rejection of accepted propositions, new theses categorically expressed, their categorical refutation, then wondrous discoveries, no sooner made than forgotten. All this is termed pro-

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

gress, and "the onward march of science." But in truth, are these not the cycles and epicycles of the Ptolemaic system? When will the new Copernicus appear to break the spell, and prove that the centre is not in man, but outside him, and infinitely higher than he, than the earth, than the universe itself?

The same phenomena appear in the history of all sects, from the Gnostics and the Arians to the Nihilists of to-day, the disciples of Pashkov, of Sutayev, of Tolstoi. Man, pursuing impressions, regards all things from the false point of view which he finds in himself, vainly imagining that the universe revolves around him; he looks for truth in all things and everywhere, and is wrathful with all whom he convicts, save himself, of passion and sin. It is a fatal error.

[*From REFLECTIONS. Translated by P. C. Long.*]

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

I. POLÓNSKI

(1820–1897)

GENERAL SKÓBOLEV

He stood alone!
Around from east, from west,
By Russia watched from far,
A giant—nay, a god of war!
Beneath the hostile fire he stood
Unmoved in reckless hardihood.
His snow-white vest on battle-field
Seemed covered by St. Michael's shield.
And now his life is reft; that strength
Broken at length.

[*Translated by J. Pollen.*]

A. PÚSHKIN

(1799–1837)

I

ONYÉGIN'S RETURN

(*Eugene Onyégin has to leave St. Petersburg for a distant province. There Tatiána Lárina, the daughter of a neighbour, falls in love with him and writes him a letter. Onyégin, however, only warns her against her imprudence and tells her that he would be delighted to marry her, had he not already determined never to marry! Returning to St. Petersburg after several years' travel in western Europe, he is invited to a fashionable ball, where he recognises Tatiána.*)

"And is it?" meditates Eugene.
"And is it she? It must be—no—
How! from the waste of steppes unseen,"—
And the eternal lorgnette through
Frequent and rapid doth his glance
Seek the forgotten countenance
Familiar to him long ago.
"Inform me, prince, pray do you know
The lady in the crimson cap
Who with the Spanish envoy speaks?"—
The prince's eye Onyegin seeks:
"Ah! long the world has missed your shape!
But stop! I will present you, if
You choose."—"But who is she?"—"My wife!"

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

"So you are wed! I did not know.
Long ago?"—"'Tis the second year."—
"To——?"—"Larina."—"Tatiana?"—"So.
And do you know her?"—"We lived near."—
"Then come with me." The prince proceeds,
His wife approaches, with him leads
His relative and friend as well.
The lady's glance upon him fell—
And though her soul might be confused,
And vehemently though amazed
She on the apparition gazed,
No signs of trouble her accused,
A mien unaltered she preserved,
Her bow was easy, unreserved.

Ah, no! no faintness her attacked,
Nor sudden turned she red or white,
Her brow she did not e'en contract
Nor yet her lip compressed did bite.
Though he surveyed her at his ease,
Not the least trace Onyegin sees
Of the Tatiana of times fled.
He conversation would have led—
But could not. Then she questioned him:
Had he been long here, and where from?
Straight from their province had he come?—
Cast upwards then her eyeballs dim
Unto her husband, went away—
Transfixed Onyegin mine doth stay.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Is this the same Tatiana, say,
Before whom once in solitude,
In the beginning of this lay,
Deep in the distant province rude,
Impelled by zeal for moral worth,
He salutary rules poured forth?
The maid whose note he still possessed
Wherein the heart its vows expressed,
Where all upon the surface lies,—
That girl—but he must dreaming be—
That girl whom once on a time he
Could in a humble sphere despise,
Can she have been a moment gone
Thus haughty, careless in her tone?

He quits the fashionable throng
And meditative homeward goes,
Visions, now sad, now grateful, long
Do agitate his late repose.
He wakes—they with a letter come—
The Princess N—— will be at home
On such a day. O Heavens, 'tis she!
Oh! I accept. And instantly
He a polite reply doth scrawl.
What hath he dreamed? What hath occurred?
In the recesses what hath stirred
Of a heart cold and cynical?
Vexation? Vanity? or strove
Again the plague of boyhood—love?

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

The hours once more Onyegin counts,
Impatient waits the close of day ;
But ten strikes, and his sledge he mounts
And gallops to her house away.
Trembling he seeks the young princess—
Tatiana finds in loneliness.
Together moments one or two
They sat, but conversation's flow
Deserted Eugene. He, distraught,
Sits by her gloomily, desponds,
Scarce to her questions he responds,
Full of exasperating thought.
He fixedly upon her stares--
She calm and unconcerned appears.

. . . . . .

The less we love a lady fair
The easier 'tis to gain her grace,
And the more surely we ensnare
Her in the pitfalls which we place.
Time was when cold seduction strove
To swagger as the art of love,
Everywhere trumpeting its feats,
Not seeking love but sensual sweets.
But this amusement delicate
Was worthy of that old baboon
Our fathers used to dote upon ;
The Lovelaces are out of date,
Their glory with their heels of red
And long perukes hath vanishèd.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

For who imposture can endure,
A constant harping on one tune,
Serious endeavours to assure
What everybody long has known;
Even to hear the same replies
And overcome antipathies
Which never have existed, e'en
In little maidens of thirteen?
And *what* like menaces fatigues,
Entreaties, oaths, fictitious fear,
Epistles of six sheets or near,
Rings, tears, deceptions and intrigues,
Aunts, mothers and their scrutiny,
And husbands' tedious amity?

. . . . . .

But my Onyegin the whole eve
Within his mind Tatiana bore,
Not the young timid maid, believe,
Enamoured, simple-minded, poor,
But the indifferent princess,
Divinity without access
Of the imperial Neva's shore.
O men, how very like ye are
To Eve the universal mother,
Possession hath no power to please,
The serpent to unlawful trees
Aye bids ye in some way or other—
Unless forbidden fruit we eat,
Our paradise is no more sweet.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Ah! how Tatiana was transformed,
How thoroughly her part she took!
How soon to habits she conformed
Which crushing dignity must brook!
Who would the maiden innocent
In the unmoved, magnificent
Autocrat of the drawing-room seek?
And he had made her heart beat quick!
'Twas he whom, amid nightly shades,
Whilst Morpheus his approach delays,
She mourned and to the moon would raise
The languid eye of love-sick maids,
Dreaming perchance in weal or woe
To end with him her path below.

To Love all ages lowly bend,
But the young unpolluted heart
His gusts should fertilize, amend,
As vernal storms the fields athwart
Youth freshens beneath Passion's showers,
Develops and matures its powers,
And thus in season the rich field
Gay flowers and luscious fruit doth yield.
But at a later, sterile age,
The solstice of our earthly years,
Mournful Love's deadly trace appears
As storms which in chill autumn rage
And leave a marsh the fertile ground
And devastate the woods around.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

There was no doubt! Eugene, alas!
Tatiana loved as when a lad,
Both day and night he now must pass
In love-lorn meditation sad.
Careless of every social rule,
The crystals of her vestibule
He daily in his drives drew near,
And like a shadow haunted her.
Enraptured was he if allowed
To swathe her shoulders in the furs,
If his hot hand encountered hers,
Or he dispersed the motley crowd
Of lackeys in her pathway grouped,
Or to pick up her kerchief stooped.

She seemed to him oblivious,
Despite the anguish of his breast,
Received him freely at her house,
At times three words to him addressed
In company, or simply bowed,
Or recognized not in the crowd.
No coquetry was there, I vouch—
Society endures not such!
Onyegin's cheek grew ashy pale,
Either she saw not or ignored;
Onyegin wasted; on my word,
Already he grew phthisical.
All to the doctors Eugene send,
And they the waters recommend.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

He went not—sooner was prepared
To write his forefathers to warn
Of his approach; but nothing cared
Tatiana—thus the sex is born.
He obstinately will remain,
Still hopes, endeavours, though in vain.
Sickness more courage doth command
Than health, so with a trembling hand
A love epistle he doth scrawl.
Though correspondence as a rule
He used to hate—and was no fool—
Yet suffering emotional
Had rendered him an invalid;
But word for word his letter read.

. . . . . .

No answer! He another sent.
Epistle second, note the third,
Remained unnoticed. Once he went
To an assembly—she appeared
Just as he entered. How severe!
She will not see, she will not hear.
Alas! she is as hard, behold,
And frosty as a Twelfth Night cold.
Oh, how her lips compressed restrain
The indignation of her heart!
A sidelong look doth Eugene dart:
Where, where, remorse, compassion, pain?
Where, where, the trace of tears? None, none,
Upon her brow sits wrath alone—

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

And it may be a secret dread
Lest the world or her lord divine
A certain little escapade
Well known unto Onyegin mine.
'Tis hopeless! Homeward doth he flee
Cursing his own stupidity,
And brooding o'er the ills he bore,
Society renounced once more.
Then in the silent cabinet
He in imagination saw
The time when melancholy's claw
'Mid world pleasures chased him yet,
Caught him and by the collar took
And shut him in a lonely nook.

. . . . . .

Time flies! a genial air abroad,
Winter resigned her empire white.
Onyegin ne'er as poet showed,
Nor died nor lost his senses quite.
Spring cheered him up, and he resigned
His chambers close wherein confined
He marmot-like did hibernate,
His double sashes and his grate,
And sallied forth one brilliant morn—
Along the Neva's bank he sleighs,
On the blue blocks of ice the rays
Of the sun glisten; muddy, worn,
The snow upon the streets doth melt—
Whither along them doth he pelt?

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Onyegin whither gallops? Ye
Have guessed already. Yes, quite so!
Unto his own Tatiana he,
Incorrigible rogue, doth go.
Her house he enters, ghastly white,
The vestibule finds empty quite—
He enters the saloon. 'Tis blank!
A door he opens. But why shrank
He back as from a sudden blow?—
Alone the princess sitteth there,
Pallid and with dishevelled hair,
Gazing upon a note below.
Her tears flow plentifully and
Her cheek reclines upon her hand.

Oh! who her speechless agonies
Could not in that brief moment guess!
Who now could fail to recognize
Tatiana in the young princess!
Tortured by pangs of wild regret,
Eugene fell prostrate at her feet—
She starts, nor doth a word express,
But gazes on Onyegin's face
Without amaze or wrath displayed:
His sunken eye and aspect faint,
Imploring looks and mute complaint
She comprehends. The simple maid
By fond illusions once possest
Is once again made manifest.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

His kneeling posture he retains—
Calmly her eyes encounter his—
Insensible her hand remains
Beneath his lips' devouring kiss.
What visions then her fancy thronged—
A breathless silence then, prolonged—
But finally she softly said:
"Enough, arise! for much we need
Without disguise ourselves explain.
Onyegin, hast forgotten yet
The hour when—Fate so willed—we met
In the lone garden and the lane?
How meekly then I heard you preach—
To-day it is my turn to teach.

"Onyegin, I was younger then,
And better, if I judge aright;
I loved you—what did I obtain?
Affection how did you requite?
But with austerity!—for you
No novelty—is it not true?—
Was the meek love a maiden feels.
But now—my very blood congeals,
Calling to mind your icy look
And sermon—but in that dread hour
I blame not your behaviour—
An honourable course ye took,
Displayed a noble rectitude—
My soul is filled with gratitude!

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

"Then, in the country, is't not true?
And far removed from rumour vain,
I did not please you. Why pursue
Me now, inflict upon me pain?—
Wherefore am I your quarry held?—
Is it that I am now compelled
To move in fashionable life,
That I am rich, a prince's wife?—
Because my lord, in battles maimed,
Is petted by the Emperor?—
That my dishonour would ensure
A notoriety proclaimed,
And in society might shed
A bastard fame prohibited?

"I weep. And if within your breast
My image hath not disappeared,
Know that your sarcasm ill-suppressed,
Your conversation cold and hard,
If the choice in my power were,
To lawless love I should prefer—
And to these letters and these tears.
For visions of my childish years
Then you were barely generous,
Age immature averse to cheat—
But now—what brings you to my feet?—
How mean, how pusillanimous!
A prudent man like you and brave
To shallow sentiment a slave!

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

" Onyegin, all this sumptuousness,
The gilding of life's vanities,
In the world's vortex my success,
My splendid house and gaieties—
What are they? Gladly would I yield
This life in masquerade concealed,
This glitter, riot, emptiness,
For my wild garden and bookcase,—
Yes! for our unpretending home,
Onyegin—the beloved place
Where the first time I saw your face,—
Or for the solitary tomb
Wherein my poor old nurse doth lie
Beneath a cross and shrubbery.

" 'Twas possible then, happiness—
Nay, near—but destiny decreed—
My lot is fixed—with thoughtlessness
It may be that I did proceed—
With bitter tears my mother prayed,
And for Tatiana, mournful maid,
Indifferent was her future fate.
I married—now, I supplicate—
For ever your Tatiana leave.
Your heart possesses, I know well,
Honour and pride inflexible.
I love you—to what end deceive?—
But I am now another's bride—
For ever faithful will abide."

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

She rose—departed. But Eugene
Stood as if struck by lightning fire.
What a storm of emotions keen
Raged round him and of balked desire!
And hark! the clank of spurs is heard;
Tatiana's husband soon appeared.—
But now our hero we must leave
Just at a moment which I grieve
Must be pronounced unfortunate—
For long—for ever. To be sure
Together we have wandered o'er
The world enough. Congratulate
Each other as the shore we climb!
Hurrah! it long ago was time!

[*From EUGENE ONYEGIN. Translated by H. Spalding.*]

II

"*THREE—SEVEN—ACE*"

(*Herman, an officer, hears that an old Countess possesses a secret formula for success at faro, confided to her by Cagliostro. He breaks into her room at night and, forcing her to tell him, frightens her to death. The secret lies in the rotation of cards "three—seven—ace."*)

Two fixed ideas can no more exist together in the moral world than, in the physical, two bodies can occupy

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft®

the same place at the same time; and "Three—seven—ace," soon drove away Herman's recollection of the old Countess's last moments. "Three—seven—ace," were now in his head to the exclusion of everything else.

They followed him in his dreams, and appeared to him under strange forms. Threes seemed to be spread before him like magnolias, sevens took the form of Gothic doors, and aces became gigantic spiders.

His thoughts centred on a single point. How was he to profit by the secret so dearly purchased? What if he applied for leave to travel? At Paris, he said to himself, he would find some gambling-house where, with his three cards, he could at once make his fortune.

Chance soon came to his assistance. There was at Moscow a society of rich gamblers, presided over by the celebrated Chekalinski, who had passed all his life playing at cards, and had amassed millions. For, while he lost silver only, he gained bank-notes. His magnificent house, his excellent kitchen, his cordial manners, had brought him numerous friends and secured for him general esteem.

When he came to St. Petersburg, the young men of the capital filled his rooms, forsaking balls for card-parties, and preferring the emotions of gambling to the fascinations of flirting. Herman was taken to Chekalinski by Narumov. They passed through a long suite of rooms, full of the most attentive, obsequious servants. The place was crowded. Generals and high officials were playing at whist; young men were stretched out on the sofas, eating ices and smoking long pipes. In

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

the principal room at the head of a long table, around which were assembled a score of players, the master of the house held a faro bank.

He was a man of about sixty, with a sweet and noble expression of face, and hair white as snow. On his full, florid countenance might be read good humour and benevolence. His eyes shone with a perpetual smile. Narumov introduced Herman. Chekalinski took him by the hand, told him that he was glad to see him, that no one stood on ceremony in his house; and then went on dealing. The deal occupied some time, and stakes were made on more than thirty cards. Chekalinski waited patiently to allow the winners time to double their stakes, paid what he had lost, listened politely to all observations, and, more politely still, put straight the corners of cards when in a fit of absence some one had taken the liberty of turning them down. At last when the game was at an end, Chekalinski collected the cards, shuffled them again, had them cut, and then dealt anew.

"Will you allow me to take a card?" said Herman, stretching out his arm above a fat man who occupied nearly the whole of one side of the table. Chekalinski, with a gracious smile, bowed in consent. Narumov complimented Herman, with a laugh, on the cessation of the austerity by which his conduct had hitherto been marked, and wished him all kinds of happiness on the occasion of his first appearance in the character of a gambler.

"There!" said Herman, after writing some figures on the back of his card.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

"How much?" asked the banker, half closing his eyes. "Excuse me, I cannot see."

"Forty-seven thousand roubles," said Herman.

Every one's eyes were directed toward the new player.

"He has lost his head," thought Narumov.

"Allow me to point out to you," said Chekalinski, with his eternal smile, "that you are playing rather high. We never put down here, as a first stake, more than a hundred and seventy-five roubles."

"Very well," said Herman; "but do you accept my stake or not?"

Chekalinski bowed in token of acceptation. "I only wish to point out to you," he said, "that although I am perfectly sure of my friends, I can only play against ready money. I am quite convinced that your word is as good as gold; but to keep up the rules of the game, and to facilitate calculations, I should be obliged to you if you would put the money on your card."

Herman took a bank-note from his pocket and handed it to Chekalinski, who, after examining it with a glance placed it on Herman's card.

Then he began to deal. He turned up on the right a ten, and on the left a three.

"I win," said Herman, exhibiting his three.

A murmur of astonishment ran through the assembly. The banker knitted his eyebrows, but his face speedily resumed its everlasting smile.

"Shall I settle at once?" he asked.

"If you will be kind enough to do so," said Herman.

Chekalinski took a bundle of bank-notes from his

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

pocket-book, and paid. Herman pocketed his winnings and left the table.

Narumov was lost in astonishment. Herman drank a glass of lemonade and went home.

The next evening he returned to the house. Chekalinski again held the bank. Herman went to the table and this time the players hastened to make room for him. Chekalinski received him with a most gracious bow. Herman waited, took a card, and staked on it his forty-seven thousand roubles, together with the like sum which he had gained the evening before.

Chekalinski began to deal. He turned up on the right a knave, and on the left a seven.

Herman exhibited a seven.

There was a general exclamation. Chekalinski was evidently ill at ease, but he counted out the ninety-four thousand roubles to Herman, who took them in the calmest manner, rose from the table, and went away.

The next evening, at the accustomed hour, he again appeared. Every one was expecting him. The generals and high officials had left their whist to watch this extraordinary play. The young officers had quitted their sofas, and even the servants of the house pressed round the table.

When Herman took his seat, the other players ceased to stake, so impatient were they to see him have it out with the banker, who, still smiling, watched the approach of his antagonist and prepared to meet him. Each of them untied at the same time a pack of cards. Chekalinski shuffled, and Herman cut. Then the latter took up a card and covered it with a heap of bank-notes. It

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

was like the preliminaries of a duel. A deep silence reigned through the room.

Chekalinski took up the cards with trembling hands and dealt. On one side he put down a queen and on the other side an ace.

"Ace wins," said Herman.

"No. Queen loses," said Chekalinski.

Herman looked. Instead of an ace, he saw a queen of spades before him. He could not trust his eyes! And now as he gazed in fascination on the fatal card, he fancied that he saw the queen of spades open and then close her eye, while at the same time she gave a mocking smile. He felt a thrill of nameless horror. The queen of spades resembled the dead Countess!

Herman is now at the Abuhov Asylum, Room No. 17—a hopeless madman! He answers no questions which we put to him. Only he mumbles to himself without cessation, "Three—seven—ace; three—seven—*queen*!"

[*From THE QUEEN OF SPADES, ch.* 6.
Translated by Mrs. Sutherland Edwards.]

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

III

THE THREE SISTERS

Three fair maidens evening late
By a window spinning sate.
"If an empress I could be,"
Said one maiden of the three,
"I myself would cook a feast
All should eat from west to east."
"If an empress I could be,"
Said the second sister, she,
"I would spin and quite alone
Weave for all the world a gown."
"If an empress I could be,"
Said the youngest of the three,
"I, to please my husband-Tsar,
Hero-sons to him would bear."

Barely is her speaking o'er,
Softly open'd was the door;
In the chamber walk'd the Tsar,
Monarch of that country far.
He had listened, and the third
Pleased him best of all he heard.
"Welcome, maiden fair," said he,
"Thou, sweet, shalt mine empress be;
And, before September's gone,
Bear to me a hero-son!—
Come with us, dear sisters, too,
Rise and hear what ye shall do.—
One my looms shall overlook,
And the other shall be—cook!" . . .

[*From THE TALE OF TSAR SALTAN.*
Translated by C. E. Bechhofer.]

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

M. SALTIKOV-SHCHEDRIN

(1826–1889)

THE FAIRY-TALE OF A PEASANT AND TWO GENERALS

Once upon a time there were two generals. They were both light-minded, and so, presto! by a wave of my magic wand I carried them off to a desert island!

The generals had served all their lives in a government department. They had been born and bred and grown old in it; consequently they did not understand anything. They hardly even knew any words except, "Accept the assurance of our best respects." The department was dissolved as superfluous, and the generals were released to their own free will. Remaining on the civil list, they settled down in Petersburg in the same street; each had a cook and drew a pension. But suddenly they arrived on the desert island, woke up and saw they were both lying under one cover. Of course, at first they did not understand anything, but began to converse as if nothing had happened.

"I had a queer dream this morning, your excellency," said one general, "I dreamed I was on a desert island." He said this, and suddenly gave a start. And the other general gave a start too. "Heavens! What's the

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

matter? Where are we?" screamed both generals in a terrible voice. And they began to feel one another to see if it weren't a dream. But much as they tried, they had to be convinced of the sad reality.

Before them on one side spread the sea, on the other lay a small mound of earth, and behind this was the same limitless sea. The generals wept for the first time since the closing of the department. They began to look at each other, and saw that they were in their nightshirts and each one was wearing a medal.

"How nice it would be to have coffee now!" said one general, but, remembering the incredible thing that had happened to them, wept a second time. "Whatever shall we do?" he continued through his tears. "If we were to write a report about it—but what good would that do?"

"Look here, your excellency," said the second general, "you go to the east and I'll go to the west, and to-night we'll meet again here. Perhaps we shall discover something." They began to look for the east and the west. They remembered how a Chief of Staff had once said: "If you want to find the east, stand facing the north, and you get it on your right hand." They began to look for the north; they stood so, and so, tried all the quarters of the earth, but, as they had served all their lives in the department, they did not find anything.

"Look here, your excellency; you go to the right and I'll go to the left; that'll be better," said one general, who, besides the department, had also been writing-master in a school for soldiers' sons, and was

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

consequently of superior intelligence. No sooner said than done. One general went to the right, and saw trees and all sorts of fruit growing on them. He wanted to get just one apple, but they were all too high. He tried to climb the tree—in vain! He only tore his nightshirt. He came to a river and saw fishes swarming and swarming in it. "If only there were fish like that at home!" he thought, and his very face altered from appetite. He went into the woods, and there were woodcocks whistling and grouse calling and hares running about. "Heavens! Dinner! Dinner!" said the general, beginning to feel faint. There was nothing to be done; he had to return to the rendezvous with empty hands. He arrived, and the other general was already waiting.

"Well, your excellency, have you got anything?"

"I've found an old number of the *Moscow Gazette*,[1] that's all."

The two generals lay down again, but they could not sleep for empty stomachs. One began to worry about who would draw their pensions; the other remembered all he had seen in the day—the fruit, the fish, the woodcocks, grouse and hares.

"Your excellency," said he, "whoever would have thought that dinner, before it's cooked, flies and swims and grows on trees?"

"Yes," answered the other, "I must confess I always thought rolls were born looking just as they do when they are brought in with the morning coffee."

[1] A reactionary organ, beloved of all bureaucrats.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

"For instance, it looks as if to eat a partridge, you'd have to catch it first and kill it, and skin it and roast it. But however is it done?"

"However is it done?" repeated the other general, like an echo.

They said no more and again tried to sleep. But hunger drove sleep away. Woodcocks, turkeys, sucking-pigs danced before their eyes, juicy, lightly browned, with salad and pickled cucumbers.

"I could eat my boots now, I believe," said one general.

"Gloves must be nice, too, when they've been worn a long time," sighed the other general.

Suddenly both generals looked at each other; in their eyes shone an ominous fire, their teeth chattered, a dull roar rose from their chests. Slowly they began to creep towards one another, and, in the twinkling of an eye, the two fell into a frenzy. Fragments flew, shrieks and sighs resounded; the general that had been a writing-master bit off his companion's medal and swallowed it at a gulp. Then the sight of the flowing blood brought them to their senses.

"The power of the Cross be upon us!" they cried together. "If we go on like this, we shall eat one another!"

"However did we get here? Who is the villain that has played this trick on us?"

"Your excellency, we must divert ourselves with conversation, or there'll be murder done," said one general.

"Very well, begin," answered the other.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

"Why is it, do you think, that the sun first rises and then sets, and not the other way about?"

"You're a queer fellow, your excellency. Didn't you get up first, then go to the department and have dinner there, and then go to bed?"

"But don't I first go to bed and then get up in the morning?"

"H'm, yes. But, well, when I was in the department, I always put it this way: Now it's morning, afterwards it'll be afternoon; then we'll have supper, and then it'll be time for bed." The memory of supper threw them both into low spirits and cut short that conversation at the very commencement.

One of them began again. "A doctor told me once that a man could live for a long time on his own juices."

"How?"

"Like this: Your own juices produce other juices; these in their turn produce other juices, and so on, till the juices cease altogether."

"And then?"

"Then you have to take other food."

"Pah!"

Indeed, whatever the generals began to discuss perpetually led to a reminder about food, and this still further provoked their appetites. They decided to stop talking, and, remembering the number of the *Moscow Gazette* they had found, eagerly set about reading it.

"Yesterday," read one general in an agitated voice, "the respected Chief of Police at Moscow gave an official dinner. A thousand guests were served with

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

astounding sumptuousness. The good things of all countries had, as it were, arranged a rendezvous at this wonderful feast. There was sturgeon from the Volga, and that denizen of the Caucasian wilds, the pheasant, and, a rare dish in the north in February, fresh strawberries——"

"Good heavens, your excellency, couldn't you find something else to read?" cried the other general desperately, and, taking the paper from his colleague began to read as follows: "A correspondent in Tula writes: Yesterday, on the occasion of a sturgeon being taken in the river here (an event which even the oldest inhabitants cannot remember, all the more as inside the fish was recognized the police-inspector B——), a festival took place in the local club. The cause of the festivities was brought in on a huge platter, surrounded by pickled cucumbers and holding a piece of parsley in its mouth. Doctor P——, who was on duty for the day, carved it carefully, so that every guest received a portion. The sauces were of great and even capricious variety——"

"Excuse me, your excellency, but you don't seem to have been very careful in your choice of reading," interrupted the first general, and, snatching away the paper in his turn, he read: "Our correspondent at Viatka writes us that one of the old inhabitants of the town has invented the following original method of preparing fish-soup: he takes an eel and flays it alive, and when, from the agony, its liver swells——"

The generals bowed their heads. No matter what paragraph they turned to, everything was about food.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Their own brains rebelled against them, for, however much they tried to drive away thoughts of beefsteaks, all the same these thoughts broke in on them most violently.

Suddenly inspiration came upon the general who had been a writing-master. "How would it be, your excellency," he said joyfully, "if we found a peasant?"

"A peasant?"

"Yes, yes, an ordinary peasant—like any other peasant! He'd give us a loaf at once, and catch us woodcock and fish."

"H'm, a peasant? But where can we find one, when there isn't a peasant here?"

"Not a peasant? There are peasants everywhere! You've only got to look for them. They're sure to hide themselves somewhere, to try and dodge their work."

This thought so enheartened the generals that they jumped up like mad and hurried off to look for a peasant. Long they ranged the island without success, but, at last, the sharp smell of dough and bitter mutton put them on the track. And there, under a tree, with his belly in the air and his head pillowed on his fist, a gigantic peasant was sleeping, dodging his work in the most rascally fashion. There was no limit to the generals' indignation.

"Sleeping, you lazybones!" they shouted at him "doesn't your instinct tell you that here are two generals dying of hunger? Get to work! Quick march!"

The peasant got up and saw at once that the generals were strict. He would have liked to give them the

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

slip, but they caught hold of him and wouldn't let go. And he commenced to minister unto them.

First of all he climbed a tree and picked ten of the ripest apples for each general, and took one for himself —a sour one. Then he dug the earth and got potatoes, from it; he took two pieces of wood, rubbed them together, and lit a fire. Then he made a net of his own hairs and caught a woodcock. Finally, he made a huge fire and baked so many different sorts of provisions that the generals even began to think of giving the rogue a taste of them. The generals watched these peasant efforts, and their hearts played merrily. They both forgot how the day before they had all but died of hunger, and thought, "What a good thing it is to be generals—you're never done for!"

"Are you satisfied, my lords generals?" asked the peasant lazybones.

"Quite, friend, to see your diligence," answered the generals.

"Will you let me rest now?"

"Rest, friend, but plait a cord first."

The peasant at once collected wild hemp, damped it with water, pounded it and pressed it, and by evening the cord was ready. With this cord the generals tied the peasant to a tree so that he shouldn't run away, and themselves lay down to sleep.

A day passed and another day. The peasant became so skilful that he even learned to boil soup over the fire in the palm of his hands. Our generals became merrier, puffier, fuller, and whiter. They began to say that here they were living with everything provided for

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

them, and in Petersburg meanwhile their pensions were accumulating and accumulating.

"What do you think, your excellency? Do you think the Tower of Babel ever really existed, or is it only a kind of allegory?" one general happened to say to the other at breakfast.

"I think, your excellency, that it really did exist; because how else can we explain the existence of different languages in the world?"

"And I suppose the Flood too really took place?"

"Of course, because what other explanation is there of the existence of antediluvian animals? All the more as the *Moscow Gazette* said——"

"Shall we have another look at the paper?"

They found the issue, sat down in the shade, and read it from cover to cover, what was eaten at Moscow, what was eaten at Tula, what was eaten at Kiev, what was eaten at Tver—and it passed off all right; they didn't feel the slightest unpleasantness.

Soon after or late after—anyhow, the generals grew weary! Oftener and oftener they began to recall the cooks they had left behind them at Petersburg, and they even wept quietly sometimes.

"What are they doing at home now, your excellency?" one general asked the other.

"Don't speak of it, your excellency! My heart aches all over!" answered the other.

"It's very, very nice here; one can't deny it; but still, do you know, it's a nuisance to be a lamb without a ewe. Besides, I wish I had my uniform!"

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

"I should think so! Especially ours!—you've only to look at the facings, and it makes you giddy."

They began to worry the peasant to take them to Petersburg, to Petersburg. And what do you think? It turned out that the peasant knew Petersburg, that he had been there and seen the pretty sights!

"Why, we are Petersburg generals!" cried the generals, rejoicing.

"Did you see me?" answered the peasant. "I was the man hanging outside the houses in a box on a string, and painting the walls red, and crawling over the roofs like a fly." And the peasant began to rack his brains how he might please his generals, who honoured him, a good-for-nothing, and did not disdain his peasant labours. He built a kind of boat, something like a dish, so that he could sail it over the great ocean to Petersburg.

"Take care, canaille! don't capsize us!" said the generals, looking at the barque balanced on the waves.

"Be easy, my lords generals; it isn't the first time," answered the peasant, and began to prepare for the journey. He collected soft swans' down and laid it in the little boat. He put the generals on board and tucked them in, and, crossing himself, sailed away with them. What terror the generals suffered on the journey from storms and contrary winds, how they scolded the wicked peasant—this is not to be penned with a pen or told in a tale! But the peasant went on rowing and rowing, and fed the generals with herrings.

Here at last are the dear Neva and the Nevski and Petersburg! The cooks threw up their hands to see

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

their generals so full and white, yes, and merry! The generals drank some coffee, ate some fresh rolls, dressed themselves in their unforms, and took a cab to the Treasury. How much money they drew is also not to be penned with a pen or told in a tale!

Nor were they forgetful of the peasant. They sent him a glass of vodka and a halfpenny: Revel, peasant!

[*Translated by C. E. Bechhofer.*]

T. SHEVCHÉNKO

(1814–1861)

KATERINA

Love, ye black-browed maidens, but not the Muscovites: for the Muscovites are foreign men; they do you hurt. The Moscovite, the soldier, loves with a joke, with a joke he forsakes; he will go away to his Muscovy, and the maiden perishes. If it were only she, it were naught, but the old mother who bore her into God's world must perish too. The heart withers, singing, when it knows why; folk will not ask the heart, but will say, "Worthless one." Love then, ye black-browed maidens, but not the Muscovites, for the Muscovites are foreign men; they laugh at you.

Katerina obeyed neither her father nor her mother. She came to love a Muscovite, all her heart knew how. She came to love the youth, and she went to him in the garden, till herself and her happiness she destroyed there. The mother calls to the evening meal, but the daughter does not hear. She dallies with the Muscovite and passes there the night. More than two nights she kissed her lover's black eyes, till the foul rumour was in all the village. Let the evil folk say what they wish; she loves and does not see that misery has begun.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Evil news came—they bade him march ; the Muscovite went to Turkey, Katerina cowled her head. She cared not that her plait was covered ; to suffer for her lover is as pleasant as to sing. The black-browed youth has promised ; if he live, has promised to return—then Katerina will be a Muscovite and forget her woe. And meanwhile, let folk say what they wish. Katerina is not sad—but she wipes away her tears, that the maidens in the street sing without her. Katerina is not sad—but she laves herself with her tears ; she takes the pails at midnight and goes for water, that her foes may not see her. She goes to the pool, stands beneath the guelder-rose and sings "Dear Gregory." She sings, she speaks, that the guelder-rose weeps. She returns, and is glad that none has seen her.

Katerina is not sad, and she has no bad thoughts. With a new kerchief she gazes from the window. Half a year passed—she felt pain around her heart, something pricked her side. Katerina felt ill, she scarcely lives—she grows well again, and by the stove she rocks a child. The women laugh at her, they mock her mother, that the Muscovites pass the night in her hut : "Thou hast a black-browed daughter, but she is not alone ; for by the stove she is rearing a Muscovite son.—— She has a black-browed one. Surely she taught him herself." Babblers, may evil days bite you such as have bitten the mother who has borne a son for your sport !

Katerina, my heart ! How art thou miserable ! Whither in the world wilt thou go with thy little orphan ? Who in the world will invite thee in, will welcome thee

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

without thy lover? Thy father, thy mother are as foreign folk; it is hard to live with them.

Katerina grew well again; she opens the shutter, looks into the street and rocks her child. She looks—he is not there. Will he not return? She would go into the garden to weep, but folk look at her. The sun sets—Katerina walks in the garden; in her arms she bears her son. She looks round: "Here I looked for him coming from the muster. Here I spoke with him. And here—and here—O my son, my son." And she did not finish.

In the garden the sweet and bitter cherries commence to grow green. As she used before, Katerina walked. She walks, but sings no more as she used when she awaited the young Muscovite in the cherry-orchard. She curses her ill-luck; but meanwhile her enemies do their will—they forge foul lies; what can she do? If her black-browed lover were here he would know how to make them cease. But he of the black brows is so far, he neither hears nor sees how her enemies mock her, how Katrusya weeps. Perhaps he is slain across the calm Danube; perhaps in Muscovy he loves another maid. No, he of the black brows is not slain. He lives, is well—and where can he find such eyes, such black brows? At the end of the earth, in Muscovy over the sea, there is not another Katerina. But she was good only for misery! Her mother could give her black brows and eyes, but in all the world she could not give fortune and happiness. And without fortune a fair face is like a flower in the fields; the sun burns it, the wind shakes it, any one who will may pluck it.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Lave then thy fair face with thy little tears! For the Muscovites return home by other roads.

II

The father sits at the end of the table; he rests on his arms and looks not on God's world; he is very sad. At his side the old mother sits on the bench; for tears she can hardly say to her daughter: "What of thy marriage, daughter; where is thy partner? Where are the rooms full of bridesmaids, and the elders and the boyars? In Muscovy, my daughter, go and seek them. Do not tell good people thou hast a mother! Cursed be the time and hour when thou wert born! If I had known, before the rising of the sun I should have drowned thee. Then thou wouldst have been good for the snake—but now for the Muscovite. My daughter, my daughter, my rosy flower! Like a berry, like a bird, I loved thee and reared thee, for misery. My daughter, what hast thou done? Thou hast repaid me. Then go and seek a mother-in-law in Muscovy; thou dost not hearken to my words. Go, perhaps thou wilt hearken to hers. Go, daughter, seek her, greet her, be happy among strangers, do not return to us! Return not, my child, from the distant land! Who, when thou art gone, will bury this head? Who will weep above me, as mine own child? Who will plant upon my grave the red guelder-rose? Who, when thou art gone, will name my sinful soul? My daughter, my daughter, my dear child, begone from us!" She scarcely blessed her, "God be with thee," and fell to the floor as if she were dead.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

The old father spoke: "Why dost thou wait, poor thing?"

Katerina began to weep and fell at his feet. "Pardon, dear father, what I have done. Pardon me, my dove, my dear hawk."

"God forgive thee, and good people. Pray to God and begone. It will be easier for me."

She could scarcely rise, she took farewell and silently left the hut. The old father and mother remained bereft. She went to the cherry-orchard and prayed to God under a cherry-tree. She took a little earth and placed it on the cross round her neck, and said, "I shall return no more. In a distant land, in foreign soil, strangers will bury me. But this morsel at least will remain to me of mine own and tell the strangers of my woe, my misery. It matters not where I be laid. Men do not talk of my sins through the whole world. Thou wilt not say it, but there is one who will say I am his mother. My God! My misery! Where shall I hide? My child, I shall hide beneath the water and thou wilt do penance for my sin, a fatherless orphan among men."

She went through the village. Katerina wept; on her head was a kerchief, in her arms a child. She left the village—the heart yearns. She looked back, nodded, and began to lament. Like a poplar she stood in the fields at the roadside; like dew before the rising of the sun fell her tears. Behind her bitter tears she does not see the world; only she hugs her son, she kisses him and cries, and he, like a little angel, knows nothing and with his tiny hands seeks her breast. The

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

sun set; the sky reddens behind the wood. She wiped her tears, turned and went away—and only fancies.

In the village for a long time they said many things, but neither her father nor mother lived to hear their words!

Such in this world men do to men. This one they bind, that one they stab, and another loses himself—and why? The Holy One knows! The world, ye see, is wide, but the lonely have not whither to go in the world. To this one fate gave land from border to border, to the other it left that, where he shall be laid. Where are those folk, where are those good people? The heart meant to live with them, to love them. They are lost, lost!

There is happiness in the world, but who knows it? There is freedom in the world, but who has it? Folk there are in the world who glitter with gold and silver. They seem to reign, but they do not know happiness, neither happiness nor freedom. In dullness and misery they put on their robes, and they are ashamed to weep. Take gold and silver and be rich; but I shall take tears, to pour away woe; I shall drown misfortune with little tears; I shall trample misfortune with bare feet. Then I shall be gay, then I shall be rich, when my heart walks in freedom!

III

Owls hoot, the forest sleeps, the stars glitter; over the road emptiness hovers. Good folk rest; what has wearied them? The one happiness, another tears—the night covered all; every one the night covered as a mother her children. Where did it caress Katrusya?

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

In the wood or in a hut? Does she play with her son in the fields beneath a sheaf? Or does she watch for the wolf in the woods from beneath a tree? Black brows, may none possess you, if for you such woes must be suffered! What will befall her more? There will be, there will be woe. She will meet yellow sands and strange men; she will meet the cruel winter. And he—will he meet, will he recognize Katerina, and greet his son? With him she, the black-browed, would forget the roads, the sands, her woes. He, like a mother, will greet her, like a brother will speak to her—we shall see, we shall hear.

Meanwhile I shall rest, meantime I shall ask the way to Muscovy, the far away, my lord-brothers! I know it, I know! My heart grows cold, when I remember it. I, too, have measured it; may none measure it more! I could tell of that misery, but who will believe me? "He lies," they will say, "the such-and-such" (of course, not to my eyes). "He only spoils speech and bothers the people." Truth, truth is yours, folk. And why know it, that which I shall pour before you with tears? Why? Every one has enough of his own. Be damned to it! Meantime pass tinder and tobacco, so as not, ye know, to be sad at home; they tell of woes on purpose that we may have evil dreams—the wicked one take it! Rather shall I say where Katerina fares to Ivan.

Beyond Kiev and the Dnieper, beneath a dark grove, the salt-merchants follow the road and sing, 'The Eagle-Owl.' A young woman goes by the road, surely on a pilgrimage. Why is she sad and not gay, and are

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

her eyes as if they were weeping? Her coat is patched; on her back is a bag, and in her arms the child slumbered. She met the salt-merchants, covered the child and asked, "Good folk, which is the way to Muscovy?" "To Muscovy? This very way. Goest far, poor thing?" "To Moscow itself. In the name of Christ, give me for the road." She takes the alms and trembles; it is hard to take it. And why must she?—And the child! She is his mother. She wept and followed the road. At the Breweries she rested and bought her son a honey-cake. Long, long the poor creature went and always asked; and often with her son passed the night under a wall.

Ye see the use of black brows—to sleep under a stranger's wall! Regard, ye maidens, and do penance for your sins, that ye seek not a Muscovite, that ye seek him not, as Katerina did. Then ask not why folk scold; why they allow them not to pass the night in their hut.

Ask not, ye black-browed maidens, for folk do not know; whom God punishes in the world, they punish too. Men bow themselves, like willows, the way the wind blows. The sun shines on the orphan; it shines, but does not warm. Men would gladly cover the sun, if they had the might, that it might not shine on the orphan and dry his tears. And why, dear God, why to be so sad; what has she done to folk? What do they wish? That she weep—My heart, Katerina, do not weep; do not show them thy tears; suffer unto death! And lest thy face with thy black brows be lost, lave thyself with tears in the dark wood before the

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

rising of the sun. Thou wilt lave thyself, they will not see it and will not mock thee; and the heart will rest while the tears flow.

Such, ye see, is misery, maidens! With a joke the Muscovite forsook Katrusya. Misery sees not with whom to joke; and though men see, they do not pity. "Let," they say, "the wicked child perish, once she could not respect herself!" My dears, respect yourselves in the evil hour, that ye seek not a Muscovite.

Where does Katrusya wander? Under walls she passed the nights, early she rose, and hastened to Muscovy. And there, the winter met her. The wind whistles in the field. Katerina goes in bast shoes—what woe!—in a single coat. Katrya can scarcely walk! she looks, she fancies. Muscovites seem to be coming. Misery! the heart yearns; she ran, she met them and asked: "Is not my black-browed Ivan with you?" And they say, "We do not know." And, like Muscovites always, they joke and laugh. "See the woman, what ours are like; how they cannot deceive!" Katerina looked at them, "Ye, too, I see, are men! Do not weep, my son, my woe; what will come, will come. I will go on, the farther part I have gone. Perhaps I shall meet him. I shall give thee to him and perish myself."

The snowdrift roars and sighs, and runs along the field. Katrya stands in the middle of the field and gives freedom to her tears. The storm tired and grew calm. Katerina would still cry, but she has no more tears. She looked at the child; laved with the tear, it became rosy as a flower in the morning beneath the dew.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Katerina smiled, heavily she smiled ; round her heart, like a snake, a black thought crept. She looked round silently ; she sees the wood is black, and under the wood at the roadside there seems to be a hut. "Let us go, my son, it is growing dark, if they will let us enter the hut—if they will not let us in, we shall sleep outside. At the doorside we shall pass the night. Ivan, my son, where wilt thou sleep when I am not here. My son, love the dogs in the court ! Dogs are evil, they will bite thee, but they will not speak and laugh. To eat and drink with dogs ! My unhappy head, what shall I do ? "

The orphan dog has its fortune in the world ; an orphan, it has a good word in the world ; they beat it and scold it, they enslave it, but none will ask it of its mother, and laugh. But Ivan they will ask, very soon they will ask ; they will not let the child even learn to speak. At whom do the dogs bark in the street ? Who, naked and hungry, sleeps under the wall ? Who walks with the beggar ? The dark bastard ! His only fortune—black brows ; but the jealous folk do not let him bear them.

IV

In a ravine beneath the mountains, like old men with mighty brows, stand the oaks from the time of the hetmans ; in the ravine a dyke, a row of willows, a pond in slavery beneath the ice ; a hole has been cut in it for water. The morning-flower reddens. Behind the clouds the sun begins to burn ; and the wind would blow. All is white. Only in the wood there is the roaring.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

The storm roars and whistles; it howls in the wood, like the sea the white field rolls with snow. The forester went out to look at the wood, but it is so terrible that he sees nothing. "Oho, I see: what weather! Let the wood be; I'll go into the hut. What's wrong with the hundred devils? They've made the soldiers walk as if they really were busy. Just look how white they are!"

"Who, Muscovites? Where are the Muscovites?"

"What hast thou? Calm thyself!"

"Where are the Muscovites, the swans?"

"There, look at them."

Katerina ran, nor clad herself.

"Surely she may well remember Muscovy, for in the night she knows only to call a Muscovite."

Through the tree stumps and the snow she runs and scarcely breathes. Barefoot she stood in the middle of the road and wiped her eyes with her sleeves. And Muscovites came towards her, mounted, as one man. "My misery, my woe!" To them! But she looks; before them their captain rides. "Ivan, my love. My dearest heart! Where hast thou been so long?" She runs to him, to his stirrups. He looks at her and spurs his horse's sides. "Why dost thou go away? Hast thou then forgotten Katerina? Dost not recognize me? Look, my dove, look at me! I am thy love, Katerina. Why dost thou wrest away the stirrup?" But he hastens his horse as if he saw nothing. "Wait, my dove; look! I do not weep; didst thou not recognise me, Ivan? My heart, look! By God I am Katrusya!"

"*Fool, begone! Take this mad woman away!*"

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

"My God! Ivan! Dost thou forsake me? And thou hast sworn!"

"*Take her away! What are ye waiting for?*"

"Whom? Take me? And why, say, my dove? To whom wouldst thou give thy Katrya, who came out to thee in the garden; thy Katrya, who gave thee a son? My father, brother, thou wilt not forsake me. I will be thy slave. Love another—the whole world! I shall forget that I loved thee, that from thee I had a son, and became a despised woman, a despised woman. What shame! Why do I perish? Forsake me, forget me, but forsake not thy son. Thou wilt not forsake me, my heart? Do not flee from me. I will bring thee thy son." She dropped the stirrup and ran to the hut.

She returns, brings him his son: unswaddled, weeping, the child of her heart. "Here he is! Look at him. Where art thou hiding?—He has gone! He is not here! My son, my son, thy father has disowned thee. My God! My child! Where shall I go with thee? Muscovites, doves, take him with you; swans do not forsake him! He is orphaned. Take him and give him to your captain as a son! Take him, for I shall leave him as his father left him. Let misfortune never leave him! Thy mother bore thee into the world by sin—grow up for the laughter of men." She forsook him on the road. "Now, stay and seek thy father. I have sought him already." She rushed from the road into the wood like a mad woman, and the child remained. He weeps, poor thing. And to the Muscovites it is naught—they pass by. It was well, but by ill-luck the forester heard him.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Katrya runs barefoot in the wood, runs and wails; now she curses her Ivan; now she weeps; now she entreats. She runs to a clearing; she looks round, she runs into the ravine—mutely she found herself upon the middle of the pond. "O God, receive my soul; and thou, my body!" She jumped into the water. Under the ice something cracked. Black-browed Katerina found what she sought. The wind blew over the pond, and there was left no trace.

It is not the joyous wind that breaks the oak. It is not a heavy woe, that the mother dies. Little children that have buried their mother are not orphans; good fame is left to them, and her grave remains. Evil folk will laugh at the little orphan. He will cry over the grave and his heart will rest. But to this one—what remained in the world to him whom the father did not even see and the mother has forsaken? What remained to the bastard? Who will speak to him? He has neither family nor cottage, but roads, sand and woe. The face of a lord, black brows; why? They might recognise them. But she did not hide them, she painted them; would they might fade!

V

A minstrel was journeying to Kiev and sat down to rest; his guide carries many bags. The little child beside him goes into the sun; meantime the old minstrel sings "Jesus." Whoever goes, whoever rides, does not pass by: one gives the old man bread, another pence, but the black-browed maidens give farthings to the little guide. They look at him; he is

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

naked and barefoot. "She gave," say they, "brows, but she did not give happiness."

Drives on the Kiev road a big berlin, with six horses, and in the berlin is a lady with a lord and their family. They halt opposite the beggars; the dust settles. Ivan runs to them, for they wave from the windows. The lady gives money to Ivan and is astonished. The lord looked—and turned away! He recognised, the wretch, he recognised those eyes, those black brows; the father recognised his son, but he will not take him. The lady asks, what is his name. "Ivan." "*How sweet!*" The berlin started off, and the dust covered Ivan.

They counted how much they had got, got up, prayed ere the rising of the sun, and followed the roadside.

[*Translated by S. Volska and C. E. Bechhofer.*]

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft®

F. TIÚTCHEV

(1803–1873)

TEARS OF THE PEOPLE

Tears of the people, ye tears of the people,
Stream down both early and late in the day,
Pour down unrecognized, pour down invisibly,
Stream inexhaustively, numberless, ceaselessly,
Flow down as gush forth the rains from the firmament
In the dull autumn, in night dank and grey.

[*Translated by L. A. Magnus.*]

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

ALEXIS TOLSTÓI

(1817–1875)

THE DEATH OF IVAN

CHARACTERS

Ivan the Terrible

Bogdán Biélski	Mstislávski
Shúiski	Nagói
Zahárin	Boris Godunóv

and other Boyars.

Jacóbi	Elms
Fool	Buffoons.

BIÉLSKI (*to* FOOL) : Stand thou the whole time by
The Tsar ; keep watch upon his countenance ;
And if he but begin to frown, throw in
What jest thou hast most laughable.

FOOL : Ah ! yes,
Throw in ! Wilt thou not try that throw thyself ?
And he will throw thee out of window for't !

(*The door opens.*)

BIÉLSKI : He comes ! Go jest with him !

(IVAN *is carried in, in an arm-chair. He wears a dressing-gown ; his countenance shows the*

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

exhaustion of illness, but has a triumphant expression. The chair is placed in the middle of the room, and before it is put a small three-legged table. After IVAN *enter* GODUNÓV, MSTISLÁVSKI, SHÚISKI, *and the other Boyars.*)

IVAN (*sitting in the arm-chair, to* GODUNÓV):
To-day we cannot
Receive the envoy of the English queen.
Let him to-morrow, without sword or orders,
Come to take leave of us. In our bedchamber
We will receive him simply. Now, let's see
What we can to our sister Elizabeth
Assign in gift, and what unto her niece,
Our bride.

BIÉLSKI: From Persia here are fabrics, Tsar,
A choice of them; it may be some will please
The queen.

IVAN: No, she's not one that thou canst catch
With rags. Peésemski writes to us from London,
That in the woods she likes to hunt the deer,
Is fond of hawking, and the fight of beasts.
We will a gift provide unto her taste.
Give me those trappings furbished with turquoise,
And interset with pearl; and put up also
That housing there, the one that's set with gems.

(*The objects he asks for are handed to* IVAN. *He examines them, and signs to put them away.*)

We'll send her also two live bears in chains
Of gold. and with them falcons six of breed
Siberian. Let our sister think of us
When she diverts herself. To th' Lady Hastings—

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

That's another matter. Dresses we'll find
For her. Hand me the rings and necklaces.

(*Various objects of jewellery are handed to* IVAN. *He takes them up, and examines them one after another.*)

This necklace here of diamonds and sapphires,
With rubies mixed, we'll send to the princess.
A dark gem is the sapphire, and when one
Doth gaze into its depth, it calms the soul
And drives away all grief; the ruby watches
O'er the faith of women, therefore is its hue
A blood-red colour. Of the rings send this
To her; it is the costliest of all:
'Tis called the stone *Balas*; 'twas brought to us
From India, and is not easily
Obtained, because the fear-inspiring beasts,
The griffons, there do flee from it. The bite
Of snakes is healed by it. Let, then, our bride
Upon her finger wear it for our love:
As for the tissues, I'm not learned in them;
Ask the Tsarítsa Mária about them;
Old women are well up in that. Hah! likes it
Th' Tsarítsa, that we send to the princess?

FOOL: Ho, daddy Tsar!

IVAN: What?

FOOL: When hast thou a mind
To marry thee?

IVAN: What's that to thee?

FOOL: A whim.

(*Pointing to* MICHAEL NAGÓI.)

I want to do a piece of service to

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Our Mishka there: the day of the Nagóis
In th' palace now is over, so I want
To get up this for them.

(*Takes his cap and goes round with it, as if begging for alms.*)

IVAN: What dost thou, Fool?

FOOL: I'm gathering threads, Tsar, round about the world,
To make a shirt up for Nagói; he'll want it!

IVAN: Ha, ha! A rare fool thou, a very fool!
But, fear not, the Nagóis I'll find in clothes.

(*To the* NAGÓIS.)

Ye there! If ye serve me well, I'll not
Abandon you.

(*Looking at the treasures.*)

My chests, thank God, have something
In them still; I have got the wherewithal
For those whom I'd reward; a good time yet
'Twill last me.

(*Cries on the square before the palace.*)

Ha! What cries are those?

GODUNÓV: The people
Are noisy, Tsar; they are rejoicing that
Thy health's restored to thee.

IVAN: Let them rejoice! Roll out to them, upon
The open square, a hundred casks of mead
And wine. To-morrow morning there shall be
Fresh fun for them. The wizards and astrologers,
Who lyingly foretold my death to-day,
Shall roasted be on pyres. Go, Boris,
And tell them of their punishment, then come

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

And let me know the faces that they make.

(*Exit* GODUNÓV.)

Ha! they would try to jest with me! They wished
To frighten with their Cyril's day! No man
Can know the day of death beforehand. None!
You! Do you hear?

SHÚISKI: We hear, O Tsar!

IVAN: Then why
Your mouths shut? Is it like that any man
Can say beforehand, *so* long I've to live?
Or *thus* my life must end?

MSTISLÁVSKI: None can, great Tsar!

IVAN: Well, well, what then? Why are your mouths shut, ah?

SHÚISKI: Great Tsar! that thou mayst keep in health we pray
To God both day and night.

MSTISLÁVSKI: May the Lord heal thee,
And quickly of His grace!

IVAN: Am I not, then,
Yet healed? What dost thou mean? Am I, then, ill?
The sun is on the wane, and I feel heartier
Than in the morning. I have many years
Of life before me yet, enough to build up
Anew my kingdom. In my dying hour,
When my carcass, with the Holy Senate,
The Metropolitan shall pray, I'll say to 'em,
Weep not, I'm comforted; for I can hand
An empire free of troubles to my son,
Thus will I go unto my God.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

(BIÉLSKI *makes a sign to the* FOOL, *who has been examining different articles on the table. The* FOOL *takes up a box with chessmen, and carries it to* IVAN.)

FOOL: Noncle Tsar! See here, what poppets!

IVAN (*to the Boyars*): To death for lies the wizards have I sentenced;
Say, is not this my sentence just?

THE BOYARS: Just, Tsar!

IVAN: Then, if 'tis just, why are ye tongue-tied?

THE BOYARS: Great Tsar! forgive. We know not what to say.

IVAN: Ye know not? So, to death, then, I've devoted
Men that are innocent? See, then, the wizards
Have not lied?

THE BOYARS: They lied, Tsar! They have lied!
The torment meets the fault. For guilt like theirs
Such death as theirs is little.

IVAN: Ha! at last!
To ope their mouths they are afeared. Words from them
Must be drawn out with pincers.

(*A silence.*)

What d'ye mean
By whispering there?

SHÚISKI: No, Tsar, we did not whisper.

IVAN: Ye seem to wait to-day for something? Ah!
What are ye waiting for?

FOOL: O noncle Tsar!

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Give but a look to th' poppets here!

IVAN: What's in't?

BIÉLSKI: A game of chess, O Tsar, sent as a present
By the Tsar of Persia to thee.

FOOL (*looking over the figures*): Here are dresses!

BIÉLSKI (*taking a board from the table*): And here's the board for them.

IVAN: Here, give them me! (*Examines the chessmen.*)

'Tis long since I have played a game. Sit down, Bogdán; let's see who's stronger.

(*Servants bring candles.* IVAN *places his men.* BIÉLSKI *sits opposite him, and also places his men.*)

FOOL (*to* IVAN, *pointing to the chessmen*): To the life,
To th' very life thy Boyars! Now, look here,
Set those, the living ones, aside, and place
In th' Council these. Affairs will not go worse,
And these will not want feeding.

IVAN: Ha, ha, ha!
The clown's but half a fool to-day.

(*He moves a pawn. The game begins. All stand round the* TSAR'S *chair, and look on.*)

FOOL: Or, in their stead, make thou of me a Boyar:
I'll seat me in the Council all alone,
And disaccord will there be none with me.
Or, noncle, send me to Lithuania
As envoy to congratulate the king.

IVAN: On what, Fool?

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft®

FOOL: Ah! on breaking 'gainst the wall
Of Pskov his head.
IVAN: 'Twould not be bad to send thee;
I take it, he'll think twice now ere he march
On Nóvgorod.
SHÚISKI: Not he!
IVAN: The Diet hath
Refused the king's supplies. I' faith, it moves
To laughter! To a sovereign his subjects
Won't e'en give money.
FOOL: 'Tis not so with us:
Aught wanted—here, man, there, man—and 'tis got!
BIÉLSKI (*advancing with his queen*): Check, Tsar!
IVAN (*covering with his bishop*): Check to thy queen!
SHÚISKI (*smiling to* BIÉLSKI): What hast thou gained?
The queen is lost!
IVAN: 'Tis like it!
BIÉLSKI: Yes, 'tis so;
The queen is lost!
IVAN: The game goes well for us:
We have not quite forgotten yet to play;
Our sickness yet hath not deprived us of
All power of thinking. Cyril's day! Ha! 'twas
A rare device! The cursèd dogs! But whither
Hath Boris betaken him? Why comes he not
To bring their answer?

(BIÉLSKI *takes the* TSAR'S *bishop.* IVAN *wishes to take his queen with his king, and drops the latter piece on the ground.*)

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

FOOL (*running to pick it up*): Oh, oh, oh! The Tsar
Hath tumbled!

IVAN (*bursting out*): Fool! take heed! Thy place
know, sirrah!

(*To* BIÉLSKI.)

Thy move!

(*The game continues.* GODUNÓV *appears in the doorway.*)

GODUNÓV (*speaking low, and pointing out* IVAN *to one of the Boyars who stands behind the others*): How is he now?

BOYAR (*low to* GODUNÓV): His mood is wrathful.
Already twice his anger hath been roused.

(GODUNÓV *approaches and stands opposite* IVAN.)

IVAN (*raising his head*): Thou here! Well, what?
Thou'st seen the conjurors?
What was their answer? Why art thou tongue-tied?
Canst thou not speak?

GODUNÓV: H'm, Tsar!

IVAN: Why look'st thou so
On me? (*Steps back from* GODUNÓV.)
How darest thou look thus?

GODUNÓV: Great Tsar!
The wizards bade me say to thee, for answer,
That true their science is.

IVAN: How!

GODUNÓV: That they cannot
Be in error, and that—not over yet
Is Cyril's day!

IVAN (*rises and totters*): Not over? Cyril's day?
And thou dost dare—

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Thou darest—villain!—to my face—thou—thou—
I've understood thy look! To kill me thou—
To kill me thou art come! Traitor! Ho, deathsmen!
Theodore! Son! No trust in him! A thief!
No trust in him. Ah!

(*Falls backward on the floor.*)

SHÚISKI (*runs to him and holds up his head*): God! he's dying!

BIÉLSKI: Call in the doctors! send for them at once!

IVAN (*opening his eyes*): A confessor!

BIÉLSKI: Run for a priest there, knaves!
Run quickly! What ho there, knaves! What ho!

(*The Buffoons rush in, singing, dancing, and whistling.*)

BUFFOONS: Hoy! burn, burn, burn!
Pull the goat's horn and nick it!

THE BOYARS: What's this? What means it? Back, as ye fear God!
The Tsar is dying!

MSTISLÁVSKI: Send for the doctors!

(IVAN *dies. Several Boyars rush out of the room. The Buffoons run off.*)

(*Enter* ELMS *and* JACÓBI.)

JACÓBI: Where is the Tsar?

BIÉLSKI (*pointing to the body*): He's there!

JACÓBI (*bending down and feeling* IVAN'S *pulse*): The pulse beats not.

ELMS (*taking the other hand*): No, it is still!

JACÓBI: The heart beats not.

ELMS: Quite dead!

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

JACÓBI : Life is over !

GODUNÓV : He's gone !

(*Opens the window and cries to those on the square.*)

People of Moscow !

The Tsar Ivan Vasílyevich is dead !

(*A confused noise of talking from the square.* GODUNÓV *leaves the room. The Boyars surround* IVAN, *and gaze at him in silence.*)

(*Enter* ZAHÁRIN : *he stops before the body.*)

ZAHÁRIN : 'Tis over ! There thou art, then, Tsar Ivan,
Before whom Russia hath trembled so long.
Powerless, helpless dost thou lie there
Without movement, and in the midst of all
Thy treasures poor ! What do we stand and wait for.
Boyars ? Should *he* be in the dust before us,
Before whom we have in the dust been lying
For half a century ? Or is it now
Fearful for you to touch him ? Fear ye not !
He'll ope his eyes no more ! That feeble hand
Will grasp no more the iron staff, nor those
Cold lips deal punishment around.

(*They take up* IVAN.)

[*THE DEATH OF IVAN THE TERRIBLE. Act V, Scene 2. Translated by I. H. Harrison.*]

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

LEO TOLSTÓI

(1828–1910)

I

THE PEASANT AND THE DEVIL

An elder sister from the city was visiting a younger sister in the country. The elder had married a merchant, and the younger a peasant. While they were drinking tea and chatting, the elder one began to boast of her city life, telling how well she lived, and how neatly she dressed herself and her children; how bountifully she ate and drank, and how she went to theatres and entertainments. The younger sister, whose pride was touched, criticized the life of tradespeople and praised her own peasant life.

"I would not change places with you," she said. "Although we live plainly, we fear no one. You live better, but you either gain a great deal, or lose all you have. It may happen that you are rich one day and poor the next. We run no risk in our business. 'A peasant's stomach is lean, but roomy'; we shall not become rich, but we shall always have enough."

The elder sister replied: "Yes, like pigs and calves, you have enough to eat, it is true; but no household comforts, no gentle manners. No matter how much

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

your husband toils, you will live and die in squalor, and your children will fare no better."

"What of that? It is our life. But we are safe, and so long as we own land, we are beholden to and fear no one. In the city you live surrounded by temptations; to-day you are safe, and to-morrow perhaps the Evil One may tempt your husband by cards, or wine, or women. Then all is lost. Don't such things happen?"

Pahom, the master of the house, was lying on the back of the brick stove, listening attentively to their conversation.

"That's true," he said, "as we have to work from early childhood, no nonsense enters our heads. True, we have not enough land, but if we had, I should fear no one, not the Evil One himself."

The women finished their tea, put away the dishes, and went to bed.

In the meantime the Devil was hidden behind the stove. He had heard what was said, and rejoiced that the peasant's wife had made her husband boast and say that did he but own more land, the Devil himself could not get him.

"All right," he thought, "we shall see. I will give you more land; that will be the very way to get you."

"What a good thing it would be," thought Pahom, "if I could buy land of my own, and build a house on it! How handy that would be!" And he thought how well it would be, if he were only able to do so.

Thus he lived five years. He hired more land and sowed it with wheat. The years were prosperous, the crops fine, and Pahom made money. Now he

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

lived well. Still he was dissatisfied at having to buy land gradually, or to be troubled in any way about it. For instance, whenever there was good land to be had, the peasants hired it at once, giving no one time to buy it, and so prevented him from getting what he wanted. Once he and a merchant did buy a meadow and ploughed it, but the former owners went back on their bargain, and so all their labour was lost. If he only possessed land in his own right, he would be beholden to nobody and would envy no one.

Pahom made inquiries where he could buy more land for himself. Finally he came across a peasant who was selling five hundred acres cheap, because he was bankrupt and could not afford to keep them. They had almost reached an understanding and were about to conclude the bargain for fifteen hundred roubles—the peasant to wait for half the money—when a travelling merchant stopped at Pahom's house to rest and feed his horses.

As they sat drinking tea and chatting, the merchant told Pahom that he was on his way from the lands of the Bashkirs, where he had purchased some five thousand acres, for which he paid only one thousand roubles.

Pahom questioned him further, and the merchant told him how he had made friends with the Elders by distributing a hundred roubles' worth of dressing-gowns and carpets, and a chest of tea, and how he had treated them with wine. The land cost him on an average only about fourpence an acre. He showed the deed and told Pahom that it bordered on a stream and was fine meadow land; and, as Pahom continued

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

to question him, he said, "There is plenty of land there. You could not walk over it in a year. It all belongs to the Bashkirs, and the people are not intelligent; they are more like sheep. I dare say you might get the land for nothing."

Thus Pahom came to the conclusion that it would be unwise for him to pay a thousand roubles for five hundred acres and shoulder a debt besides, when he could easily get ever so much more for the same money.

Pahom inquired how he could get there, and as soon as the merchant was gone, made preparations for starting. He left his wife at home and took only his workman. They stopped in the town, bought a chest of tea, some presents and wine, just as the merchant had advised; then, after travelling three hundred miles, he came on the seventh day to the lands of the Bashkirs.

Everything proved to be as the merchant had told them. They found the people on the steppe by the side of a river living in felt-covered carts; they ate no bread, and did not cultivate their lands. Cattle and horses were roaming about; the foals were tied to the carts and the mares were driven to them twice a day. The Bashkirs milked the mares and fermented the milk into koumiss. The women prepared it, while the men did nothing but drink tea and koumiss, eat mutton, and play the flute. They looked sleek and jolly, and all the summer long lived without care. They were ignorant and did not speak Russian, but were quite good-natured. As soon as they saw Pahom, they surrounded him, and an interpreter was found. Pahom

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

said that he had come to buy land. This pleased them; Pahom was invited into their best cart, seated on carpets and supported with down pillows. Tea and koumiss were offered him; a sheep was killed, and he was regaled with mutton. Then he took out his presents and distributed them. The Bashkirs were greatly pleased. They assembled and told the interpreter to speak to Pahom.

"They wish me to tell you," said the interpreter, "that they are pleased with you, and that it is our custom to honour our guests and to make returns for their gifts. You have been generous to us—now tell us what you would like to have."

"I would like best of all some of your land. We are rather crowded on ours and, besides, it is exhausted. You have plenty of it and it is rich. I have never seen any like it."

The interpreter translated his words, and the people talked the matter over. Pahom could not understand what they said; he only saw them talking and laughing. Finally they were silent. All looked at him, while the interpreter said, "They wish me to tell you, that they are willing to give you all the land you like. Just point out which suits you best, and it is yours." Again they talked the matter over, and Pahom saw that they were not agreed. He asked the interpreter what they were disputing about, and he told him that some said they ought to ask the Elder's permission and that they could not give away land without his consent, and others said that they could act without consulting him.

While they were still discussing this, a man wearing

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

a cap of fox-fur was seen approaching. All rose and became silent. The interpreter said, "This is our Elder."

Pahom at once took the richest dressing-gown and five pounds of tea, and presented them to him. He accepted the gifts, and, when he had taken the seat of honour, the Bashkirs at once proceeded to explain matters to him. He heard all, smiled, and said in Russian, "Why not? Take whatever suits you. We have plenty of land."

"How can I take it?" thought Pahom. "It ought to be deeded. They might say now it is mine, and later take it away from me."

"I am very grateful to you," he said. "It is true you have plenty of land, and I want but little. But I should like to know just how much will be mine. It had better be measured and a title-deed drawn up. You know we are all liable to die at any moment, and, although you are kind people to give me the land, your children may take it away from me."

The Elder laughed. "We will give you the title, and deed it as firmly as possible."

"I heard that a merchant visited you, and you gave him also land and a title-deed. I should like the same."

The Elder understood what he meant, and said, "We can arrange all that; we have a clerk and can go in the town and affix the necessary seals."

"And what will be the price?" asked Pahom.

"We have only one price—a thousand roubles a day."

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Pahom did not understand this. "How many acres will that make?" he asked.

"We do not know how to measure," replied the Elder. "Our price is for the day. As much as you can walk round in one day is yours; that is our way of measuring, and the price is one thousand roubles."

Pahom was surprised. "That will be a great deal," he said; "one can make a wide circuit in a day."

The Elder laughed. "It will all be yours, on one condition, namely, that if you do not return on the same day to the place you started from, you forfeit your money."

"But how will you know where I go?"

"We shall remain on the spot from whence you start; you will go and make the circuit, and our men will follow you on horseback. Wherever you tell them, they will plant poles and afterwards we shall plough it from pole to pole. You can make the circuit as wide as you like; only you must return before sunset to the spot you start from. What you encircle is to be yours."

Pahom agreed, and decided to start early They chatted awhile, drank tea and koumiss, ate more mutton, and in the evening Pahom was put on a feather bed, the Bashkirs promising to be ready at daybreak at the place agreed upon.

Pahom stretched himself out on the feather bed, but could not sleep. He was thinking about the land and what he would do with it. "The promised land, indeed!" he thought. "I can easily make a circuit

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

of thirty miles. The days are long now, and there ought to be thirty thousand acres in it. Then I shall be beholden to no one. I can buy two teams of oxen, hire a couple of workmen and cultivate the best land, using the rest for pasture."

He was unable to go to sleep, and only just before dawn managed to snatch a few winks. Hardly had he fallen asleep when he had a dream. He dreamt he was lying in the same tent and that he heard some one outside laughing. Wishing to find out who it was, he went out and saw the Elder with both hands on his stomach, sitting and laughing with all his might. Just as Pahom approached him to ask what he was laughing about, he saw that it was not the Elder but the merchant who had stopped at his house and told him about the land. As he was about to ask him when he had come there, he saw that it was the merchant no longer, but a peasant who had rested at his house formerly. And he too changed and became a devil with horns and hoofs, who sat there laughing. Pahom thought, "What can he be looking and laughing at?" He went towards him and saw a man lying on the ground, barefoot, with only a shirt and drawers on, and white as a sheet. As he examined him more closely he recognized himself! He woke up. "Queer dreams," he thought, and looked outside. He saw the daylight breaking, and knew it must be time to start and wake the others.

Pahom arose, roused his workman and told him to harness up; then went to wake the Bashkirs. "It is time to start," he said.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

They arose, assembled, and the Elder arrived. Again they drank koumiss, and wanted to offer Pahom tea, but he refused and said, "If we are going, it is time we were on our way."

The Bashkirs got ready, mounted their horses and started, Pahom and his workman following in his cart. When they arrived at the steppe, the day was beginning to break. They ascended a hillock, took out their teams and formed a group. The Elder pointed out the land to Pahom. "All this is ours," he said. "Choose!"

Pahom's eyes sparkled. Fine, rich meadows, level as the palm of your hand! Wherever there was a ravine, the variety of vegetation was still greater and the grass stood as high as your chest. The Elder took off his fur cap and placed it on the top of the hillock.

"Here is the mark," he said. "Put your money on it. Your man will stay here; start from here and return. All you encircle is yours."

Pahom took out the money, placed it on the hat, took off his coat, tightened his belt, put his bag of bread in his breast-pocket, fastened a brandy-flask to his belt, pulled up his boots and prepared to start. He was puzzled to decide which direction he had better take; the land looked good everywhere.

"It makes no difference," he thought. "I will go towards the spot where the sun rises." He turned towards the east and waited until it should appear above the horizon. "Better to lose no time; and it is easier to walk when it is cool," he thought.

The mounted Bashkirs also climbed the hillock and placed themselves behind him. As soon as the sun

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

showed itself, Pahom started on his journey, the horsemen following. He walked leisurely at first. After he had done three miles, he had a pole planted. As he went on, he increased his speed. A mile more, and another pole was planted. He glanced at the sun; the hillock was in sight, and the people on it. Pahom guessed that he had travelled about three miles. He went on and did three more. He felt warm and took off his coat; then went on again, and did another three miles. It was hot! He glanced once more at the sun and saw that it was time to think about lunch.

"A quarter of the day is past, and there are four of them," he thought. "It is too early to turn; let me pull off my boots." He sat down, took them off; then started again. Now he travelled with ease. "Three more and I shall turn to the left. This is a fine spot; it would be a pity to leave it. The farther I go, the better it is." And so he continued to walk straight ahead. As he looked back at the hillock, it was scarcely visible, and the people on it looked like ants.

"I have walked enough in this direction and must turn now. I am hot and thirsty." He raised his flask and drank a draught, ordered a pole to be planted, and turned sharply to the left. As he went on, the grass grew higher, the sun hotter, and he became more and more weary. Looking at the sun, he saw that it was the dinner-hour. He ate some bread, but did not stop to rest. "If I sit down, I should be likely to lie down and fall asleep," he thought.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

He stood still a while, then started on farther. At first he walked more easily; the food had strengthened him, but it was very hot now, and he was very tired and sleepy. "An hour to bear, a lifetime to live!" he thought. He did about six miles in this direction and, as he was about to turn to his left, he noticed a rich moist hollow. "It would be too bad to leave this out; flax would grow finely here"; and he still kept on. He took in the hollow, had a pole planted, and then turned the second corner. The people on the hillock were scarcely visible. "I have made the sides too long," he thought; "I had better make this one shorter."

It was almost noon by the sun, and he had only done a mile on the third side. Still nine remained as before. "Although my property will not be square, I must take care to make a direct line and not take in any more. I have quite enough as it is." And he aimed straight for the hillock.

He was exhausted. His feet were sore, his gait unsteady; he would have liked to rest, but did not dare, lest he might not be able to reach the hill by sunset. The sun did not wait; it began to set as if some one were hurrying it.

"Have I miscalculated, and taken in too much?" thought Pahom. "What if I am late! It is still far away, and I am tired. I must exert myself." He started to run. His feet were bleeding, yet he kept on, and still it was far away. He threw away his vest, boots, flask, and hat. "I have been greedy, and lost

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

it all," he thought; "I cannot reach the place before sunset." But still he kept on.

His shirt and drawers stuck to his body; his mouth was parched; bellows seemed to blow in his chest; his heart beat violently, and his feet scarcely supported him. He thought no more of the land—his only thought was of his life. He did not want to die, and yet he could not stop. "If I give up now, after running so far, they will call me a fool."

He heard the yells and hoots of the Bashkirs. Their shrieks made his heart beat faster. He ran with waning strength, while the setting sun approached the edge of the horizon. Only a little more remained. He saw the people on the hillock waving their hands and urging him on; he saw the fur hat with the money lying on it and the Elder seated on the ground, holding on to his stomach. He remembered his dream. "I have plenty of land, but shall I ever live on it? I am lost," he thought. And still he kept on.

He glanced at the sun; it looked large and red, and had almost reached the edge of the horizon. Now it was setting. He reached the hillock—the sun had set. Pahom was in despair. "All is lost," he thought. Then it flashed upon him that though he could not see the sun from below, it was still visible from the hillock. He ran up. As he reached the summit, he saw the hat. There it was. Then he slipped and fell. As he did so, he reached the hat with his hands.

"Well done!" said the Elder. "You own much land."

Pahom's workman ran towards him and was about to

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

raise him, when he saw blood pouring from his mouth. Pahom was dead!

The Elder, crouching on the ground and holding on to his stomach, was laughing immoderately. At last he rose, lifted a shovel from the ground and tossed it to Pahom's man. "Bury him," he said.

The Bashkirs started off and rode away. Pahom's workman remained. He dug a grave six feet long, just long enough for Pahom, and buried him.

[*HOW MUCH LAND A MAN NEEDS.*
Translated by Mrs. A. Delano.]

II

MAUPASSANT AS ARTIST

I was not at all interested in such works as the one recommended to me by Turgeniev. But, in order to please him, I read the book.

Whilst reading the first story, *Maison Tellier*, notwithstanding its improper and trifling subject, I could not but recognize in its author what is termed genius.

He possessed that special gift, called genius, which consists in the faculty of intense, strenuous attention, applied, according to the author's tastes, to this or that subject; and by means of which the possessor of this capacity sees the things to which he applies his attention in some new aspect overlooked by others. This gift of seeing what others do not see was evidently possessed

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

by Maupassant. But, to judge by the little volume I read, he was unfortunately destitute of the chief of the three qualifications which, in addition to genius, are indispensable to a true work of art. These are—

(1) A correct, that is, a moral, relation of the author to his subject.

(2) Perspicuity or beauty of expression (the two are identical); and

(3) Sincerity, i.e., an unfeigned feeling of love or hatred towards the subject depicted.

Of these three Maupassant possessed only the last two, and was utterly without the first. He had not a correct, that is, a moral, relation to the subjects he described.

Judging by what I read, I came to the conclusion that Maupassant possessed genius, that gift of attention revealing in the objects and facts of life properties not perceived by others; that he possessed a beautiful form of expression, uttering clearly, simply, and with charm what he wished to say; and that he possessed also the merit of sincerity, without which a work of art produces no effect, that is, he did not merely pretend to love or hate, but did indeed love or hate what he described. But, unhappily, being destitute of the first and perhaps most important qualification for a work of art, of a correct, moral relation to what he described—that is, lacking a knowledge of the difference between good and evil—he loved and described that which he should not have loved and described, and did not love that which he should have loved and described. Thus, in this little volume, the author described with

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

great minuteness and fondness how women seduce men, and men women; he even, as in *La Femme de Paul*, referred to certain obscenities difficult to understand. And not only with indifference, but even with contempt, he described the country labouring people as he would animals.

This ignorance of the distinction between good and evil is especially striking in the story, *Une Partie de Campagne*. In this, as a most charming and amusing joke, is related a minute account of how two gentlemen, rowing with bare arms in a boat, seduced at the same time, one of them an elderly mother, the other a young girl, her daughter.

The sympathy of the author is evidently all the time so much on the side of these two villains, that he, I will not say ignores, but simply does not see what must have been experienced by the seduced mother and maiden daughter, by the father, and by the young man evidently engaged to the daughter. And, therefore, we not only have the revolting description of a disgusting crime represented as an amusing joke, but, moreover, the event itself is described falsely, in that only one side of the subject is presented, and that the most insignificant one, namely, the pleasure taken by the scoundrels.

In this same little volume there is a story, *Histoire d'une Fille de Ferme*, which was specially recommended to me by Turgeniev, and which especially displeased me by again this incorrect relation of the author to his subject. He evidently sees in all the working folk whom he describes, only animals rising no higher than sexual and maternal love, and therefore his descriptions

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

produce an impression of incompleteness and artificiality.

Lack of understanding of the life and interests of the working people, and the representation of them as semi-brutes moved only by sensuality, spite, and greed, constitute two of the greatest and most serious deficiencies of most of the latest French authors, and, in their number, of Maupassant, who, not only in this story, but in all those others in which he treats of the people, always describes them as coarse, dull animals at whom one can only laugh. Certainly, French writers ought to know the nature of their own people better than I. But, notwithstanding that I am a Russian and have not lived with French peasants, I still assert that in so representing their own people French authors are wrong, and that the French labouring men cannot be such as they represent. If France—the France we know—with her truly great men, and the valuable contributions with which these great men have enriched science, art, and social life, and have assisted the moral development of humanity; if *this* France exists, then, also, that labouring class on whose shoulders has been, and is, supported this France of great men, must consist, not of brutes, but of men of great mental capacity. Therefore, I do not believe what is written in novels like Zola's *La Terre* and in Maupassant's stories: just as I should not believe what I might be told concerning the existence of a beautiful house standing without foundations. It may well be that the virtues of the people are not so lofty as described to me in George Sand's *La Petite Fadette* and *La Mare aux Diables*. Yet

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

they exist—of that I am firmly persuaded. And a writer who portrays the people only as Maupassant does, describing with relish only the hips and throats of Breton servant girls, and alluding to the life of labouring men with abhorrence and scoffing, commits a great mistake from the artistic point of view, because he describes his subject only from one, and that the most uninteresting, physical side, utterly leaving out of sight the other and more important spiritual side where lies the essence of the matter.

On the whole, the reading of the little book given me by Turgeniev left me altogether indifferent to the young writer.

So repugnant to me were the stories, *Une Partie de Campagne*, *La Femme de Paul*, and *L'histoire d'une Fille de Ferme*, that I did not then remark the pretty story, *Le Papa de Simon*, and the story, excellent in its description of the night, *Sur l'eau*.

"Have we not," I thought, "in our time, when there are so many amateurs of book-writing, a sufficiency of men of genius, who either do not know how to apply their gift, or else boldly apply it to what it is utterly wrong and unnecessary to describe?" And so I said to Turgeniev. After which, I forgot all about Maupassant.

The first work of his I saw after that was *Une Vie*, which some one advised me to read. This book immediately made me change my opinion of Maupassant, and from that time forward I read with interest everything signed by his name. *Une Vie* is an excellent novel; not only incomparably the best novel by Mau-

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

passant, but perhaps the best French novel, after Hugo's *Les Miserables*. Besides a remarkable power of genius, of that peculiar strenuous attention applied to the subject, by which the author perceives quite new features in the life he describes, in this novel are united, almost in equal degree, all the three qualifications for a true work of art: namely, a correct, that is, a moral, relation of the author to his subject; a beautiful form of expression; and sincerity, that is, love towards that which the author describes. Here the purport of life no longer appears to the author as consisting in the adventures of various male and female libertines; here the subject represents, as the title indicates, life; the life of a ruined, innocent, amiable woman, disposed to all that is good, and ruined precisely by the same coarse, animal sensuality, which, in his former stories, stood to the author as the central and dominant feature of life. Here all the sympathies of the author are on the side of good.

The form, beautiful in the first stories, is here brought to so high a pitch of perfection, as, in my opinion, has been attained by no other French prose writer. And above all, the author does indeed love, and deeply love, that good family which he describes; and he does indeed hate the coarse debauchee who destroys the happiness and peace of this lovable family, and, especially, ruins the life of the heroine.

And this is why all the events and actors in this tale are so life-like and memorable. The weak, good-natured, debilitated mother; the upright, weak, attractive father; the still more attractive daughter in her sim-

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

plicity, naturalness and sympathy with all that is good; their mutual relations, their first journey, their servants and neighbours; the sly, coarsely sensual, avaricious, fastidious, insolent suitor, who, as usual, deceives the innocent girl by the customary sham idealisation of the coarsest instinct; the marriage, Corsica, the beautiful descriptions of nature; the husband's coarse falseness, his seizure of power over the property, his quarrel with his father-in-law, the yielding of the good people, and the victory of insolence; the relations with the neighbours—all this is life itself in all its complexity and diversity. But not only is all this vividly and finely described; every part is, moreover, penetrated by a kind, pathetic tone which involuntarily infects the reader. One feels that the author loves this woman, loves her, not for her external form, but for her soul, for that which is good in her, that he commiserates with her, suffers with her: all of which is involuntarily transmitted to the reader. And the questions, "Why, for what end, is this fine being ruined?" "Ought this to be so?" arise of themselves in the soul of the reader and compel him to examine into the meaning of human life.

Notwithstanding the false notes which here and there appear in the novel, such as, for example, the minute description of the skin of the young girl, or the impossible and unnecessary details how, through the Abbot's advice, the forsaken wife again becomes a mother (details which destroy all the charm of the heroine's purity), or the melodramatic and unnatural account of the injured husband's vengeance; notwith-

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

standing these blemishes, not only did the novel appear to me to be excellent, but I saw behind it, no longer a talented chatterer and joker, not knowing and not wishing to know right from wrong (such as Maupassant had appeared to me to be from the first book), but a serious man, examining deeply into life, and already beginning to see his way in it.

The next novel by Maupassant which I read was *Bel Ami*.

Bel Ami is a very unclean book. The author here evidently gives himself full licence in describing what attracts him, and at times seems to lose his dominant negative attitude towards his hero, and to pass over on to his side. But on the whole, *Bel Ami*, like *Une Vie*, has for basis a serious idea and sentiment. In *Une Vie* the fundamental idea is perplexity in the face of the cruel, meaningless, suffering life of an excellent woman ruined by a man's coarse sensuality; whereas here is not only perplexity, but indignation at the prosperity and success of a coarse, sensual brute, who, by means of this same sensuality, shapes his career and attains a high position in society; indignation also at the depravity of the whole circle of society in which the hero attains success. In the former novel the author seems to ask: "Why, for what end, has this fine being been ruined? What was the cause?" Here, in this latter novel, he seems to answer: "All that is pure and good has perished and is perishing in our society, because this society is depraved, insane, horrible."

The last scene in the novel—the marriage, in a fashionable church, of the triumphant scoundrel, decorated

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

with the order of the Legion of Honour, to a pure girl, daughter of an elderly and previously irreproachable mother, who has been seduced by him; a marriage blessed by a bishop, and regarded as something good and right by all present—expresses this idea with extraordinary force. Notwithstanding its encumbrance with unclean details (in which, it is to be deplored, the author seems to find pleasure), in this novel is seen the same serious demands from life.

Read the conversation of the old poet with Duroy after dinner (when leaving the Walters, if I remember rightly). The old poet bares life before his young friend, and exhibits it as it is, with its eternal and inevitable companion, death.

"It has already got hold of me, the old hag," says he, alluding to death. "It has already shaken out my teeth, snatched away my hair, crippled my limbs, and is just ready to swallow me up. I am already in its power; it is only playing with me, like a cat with a mouse, knowing that I cannot escape. Fame? riches?—what good are they, since with these one cannot buy a woman's love. For it is only a woman's love that is worth living for. And death takes that away. Takes away that; then health, strength, and life itself. It is the lot of every one. And there is nothing more."

Such is the meaning of the words of the aged poet. But Duroy, the successful lover of all the women who please him, is so full of sensual energy and strength that he both hears and does not hear, understands and does not understand, what has been said. He hears and

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

understands, but the source of sensual life in him gushes out with such power that this unquestionable truth, while predicting the same end for him, does not disturb him.

It is the presentation of this inner contradiction in life, which, in addition to the satirical value of the novel, constitutes its chief significance. This same idea gleams in the fine scene of the death of the consumptive journalist. The author puts to himself the question: "What is this life? How settle this contradiction between the love of life and the knowledge of inevitable death?" And he does not answer. He seems to seek, to pause, and does not decide either one way or the other. And therefore, in the novel also, the author's moral relation to life continues to be correct.

But in the succeeding novels this moral relation to life begins to be confused. The appreciation of the phenomena of life begins to waver, to grow obscure, and in the last novels it is completely perverted.

In *Mont-Oriol*, Maupassant seems to unite the subjects of the two preceding novels and to repeat himself. Notwithstanding the fine descriptions, full of subtle humour, of a fashionable watering-place and the activity of the doctors in it, we have here the same debauchee, Paul, as trivial and merciless as the husband in *Une Vie*; and the same deceived, ruined, meek, feeble, lonely—always lonely—sympathetic woman, and the same impassive triumph of pettiness and triviality as *Bel Ami*.

The idea is the same, but the moral attitude of the author towards what he describes is already much lower, lower than in *Une Vie* especially. The author's

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

inner appreciation of right and wrong begins to get confused. Notwithstanding his abstract wish to be impartially objective, the scoundrel Paul evidently has all his sympathy. Accordingly, the love story of this Paul, and his attempts at and success in seduction, produce a discordant impression. The reader does not know what the author intends; whether he wishes to show all the emptiness and vileness of Paul (who in one scene unconcernedly turns away from and insults a woman merely because her waist is spoiled by her pregnancy with his child), or, on the contrary, to show how pleasant and easy it is to live as did this Paul.

In the succeeding novels: *Pierre et Jean*, *Fort comme la Mort*, and *Notre Cœur*, the moral attitude of the author towards the personages of his stories becomes yet more confused, and in the last-named disappears altogether. All these novels bear the seal of indifference, haste, artificiality, and, above all, again that same absence of a correct moral relation to life which was evident in the author's first writings. This begins precisely with the time when Maupassant's reputation as a fashionable author had become established, and he became liable to that temptation, so dreadful in our time, to which every celebrated writer is subjected and especially one so attractive as Maupassant. On the one hand is the success of his first novels, the praise of the press and the flattery of society, especially of women; on the other, the continually increasing amount of remuneration (never, however, keeping up with the continually augmenting expenses); and yet further the insistent demands of the editors, who, outbidding each other,

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

beseechingly flatter the author, and, no longer considering the merits of the works offered, accept enthusiastically everything signed by a name now established with the public. All these temptations are so great that they evidently turn his head, and he succumbs to them. He continues to elaborate the form of his novels as well as before, sometimes even better. He even loves and hates what he describes, but no longer loves it because it is good and moral, i.e., loved by all nor hates it because it is evil and hated by all, but only because this or that accidentally pleases or displeases him.

From the time of *Bel Ami* this stamp of hurriedness, and, still more, of artifice, is upon all Maupassant's novels. Henceforth he forsakes the method of his first two novels; he no longer takes as the basis of them certain demands, and on that ground describes the conduct of his character, but writes his novels as do all the common hack novelists, that is, he invents the most interesting and pathetic, or the most contemporary persons and situations, and of them composes his novel, adorning it with all those observations which he has had the opportunity of making, and which fit into the framework of the story, and does not in the least trouble himself as to how the events described relate to the demands of morality. Such are *Pierre et Jean*, *Fort comme la Mort*, and *Notre Cœur*.

However much, in French novels, we may have become accustomed to read about the "triangle," about the ever-present lover whose existence is known to every one except the husband, it still remains alto-

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

gether incomprehensible to us how it should happen that all husbands are always fools, cheated and ridiculous, whereas all lovers, who in the end themselves marry and become husbands, not only are neither ridiculous nor deceived, but are heroic. And it is even less comprehensible how all women are depraved, and yet all mothers saintly.

Yet it is upon these most unnatural and unlikely, and above all, deeply immoral ideas, that *Pierre et Jean*, and *Fort comme la Mort*, are founded. Therefore, the sufferings of the characters in these novels affect us but little. The mother of Pierre and Jean, who was able throughout her life to deceive her husband, calls forth little sympathy when she is obliged to confess her sin to her son; and still less, when she justifies herself by saying that she could not but make use of the opportunity of happiness which presented itself. Yet less can we sympathise with the man in *Fort comme la Mort*, when, after all his life deceiving his friend and depraving his friend's wife, he is distressed by not being able to deprave his mistress's daughter also, in consequence of his old age. The last novel *Notre Cœur*, has no inner purpose but the description of various kinds of sexual love. We find described a satiated, idle libertine, who knows not what he wants, and who at one time lives with a woman as depraved as, and even more depraved than himself (she not even having the excuse of sensuality, being a mentally depraved woman); and at another time forsakes her and lives with a servant; and then returns to the former, and, as it appears, lives with both. In *Pierre et Jean*, and *Fort comme la*

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Mort, there are still some touching scenes; but this last novel, *Notre Cœur*, excites only disgust.

The problem in Maupassant's first novel, *Une Vie*, stands thus: "Here is a human being, good, intelligent, lovable, inclined towards all that is good; and this being, for some reason or other, is sacrificed, first, to a coarse, fastidious, stupid, bestial husband, and, after that, to a similar son. And she perishes aimlessly, having given nothing to the world. Why is this?" The author thus puts the question, and, as it were, gives no answer. But the whole of his novel, all his feeling of sympathy with his heroine and condemnation of that which caused her ruin, is a sufficient answer to his question. If there be one man who has understood her suffering and expressed it, then it is already redeemed; as Job said to his friends, when they complain that no one will know of his sufferings. If the suffering is discovered, understood, then it is redeemed. So here, the author has discovered, understood, and revealed to men this suffering. And the suffering is redeemed, for, once understood by men, it will sooner or later be put an end to.

In the next novel, *Bel Ami*, the question stands, not, "Why do the righteous suffer?" but, "Why do the unrighteous get wealth and fame?" and, "What are wealth and fame, and how are they obtained?" As before, the problem carries with it its own answer; that answer being the denunciation of all that is so highly prized by the crowd of men. The subject of the second novel is still serious, but the moral relation of the author to the subject he describes already weakens

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

considerably, and whereas in the first novel, spots of sensuality which spoil it appear only here and there, in *Bel Ami*, these spots multiply, and many chapters are filled with dirt alone, which seems to please the author.

In the next, *Mont-Oriol*, the question, "Why, wherefore, the suffering of a worthy woman, and the success and happiness of a wild debauchee?" is no longer put; and it seems tacitly assumed that so it should be. And no moral demands are any more perceptible; but, without the least necessity, and uncalled for by any artistic consideration, there appear dirty sensual descriptions. As an example of this violation of artistic taste springing from the incorrect relation of the author to his subject, the minute description in this novel of the heroine in her bath is specially striking. This description has no object whatever; it is connected with neither the external nor inner purpose of the novel.

"Bubbles appear on the pink flesh."

"Well, what of that?" asks the reader.

"Nothing," answers the author. "I describe it because I like such descriptions."

In the next two novels, *Pierre et Jean* and *Fort comme la Mort*, no moral attitude at all is perceptible. Both novels are constructed upon vice, deceit, and falsehood, which bring the actors into tragical situations.

In the last novel, *Notre Cœur*, the position of the actors is most monstrous, wild, and immoral; and they no longer struggle with anything, but only seek enjoyments, vain, sensual, and sexual; and the author

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

appears to sympathise with their inclinations. The only deduction that can possibly be drawn from this last novel is that the greatest happiness in life is sexual intercourse, and that, therefore, one must secure this happiness in the pleasantest possible way.

The immoral relation to life is yet more striking in the half-novel, *Yvette*. The subject of this work, awful in its immorality, is as follows: A beautiful girl, innocent in soul, but depraved in the manners she has learnt in the dissolute circle of her mother, leads a libertine into error. He falls in love with her, but, imagining that the girl knowingly chatters the obscene nonsense she has learnt in the society of her mother, and which she merely repeats, parrot-like, without understanding it; imagining that the girl is already depraved, he coarsely proposes to her an immoral union. This proposal terrifies, insults her (for she loves him); it opens her eyes to her own position and that of her mother, and she suffers deeply. This profoundly touching scene is beautifully described: the collision between a beautiful, innocent soul and the depravity of the world. And here one might have stopped, but the author, without any external or inner necessity, continues his story, making this man penetrate to the girl at night and deprave her. It is evident that the author, in the early part of the novel, was on the side of the girl, but in the later part he suddenly goes over to the side of the libertine. One impression destroys the other. And the whole novel falls to pieces: crumbles down like bread which has not been kneaded.

In all his novels after *Bel Ami* (I am not now alluding to

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

his short stories, which are his chief merit and glory ; of them another time) Maupassant has evidently submitted to the theories now reigning, not only in his Parisian circle, but everywhere among artists ; theories that for a work of art it is not only unnecessary to have any clear conception of what is right and what is wrong, but that, on the contrary, the artist must totally ignore all moral questions, there even being a certain artistic merit in his so doing. According to this theory, the artist may, or should, represent that which is true to life, that which really is ; that which is fine, and therefore pleases him ; and even that which may be useful as material for "science" ; but to take into consideration questions as to what is moral or immoral, right or wrong, is not the artist's business.

I remember a celebrated painter showing me a picture of his, representing a religious procession. It was beautifully painted, but no relation of the artist to his work was perceptible.

"Well then, do you regard these ceremonies as good, and necessary to be carried out, or not?" I asked him.

With some condescension to my simplicity, he told me he did not know about that, and did not think it necessary to know ; his business was to represent *life*.

"But at least you sympathise with this?"

"I cannot say I do."

"Well, do you then dislike these ceremonies?"

"Neither the one nor the other," answered with a smile of compassion at my silliness this modern and pro-

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

foundly cultured artist, who represented life without understanding its purpose, neither loving nor hating its phenomena. And so, it is to be regretted, thought Maupassant.

In his preface to *Pierre et Jean*, he says that the writer is usually bidden "Console me, amuse me, sadden me, touch my heart, make me muse, make me laugh, make me tremble, make me weep, make me think. Only some chosen minds bid the artist compose something beautiful in the form which will most agree with your temperament."

It was to gratify this demand of "chosen minds" that Maupassant wrote his novels, naïvely imagining that what is regarded as fine in his circle is indeed that beauty which art must serve.

And in the circle in which Maupassant moved, that beauty which has been, and is, regarded as necessarily to be served by art, is principally woman, and sexual intercourse with her: woman young and pretty, woman for the most part stripped bare. It was so held, not only by all Maupassant's comrades in "art"—painters and sculptors, novelists and poets—but also by philosophers, teachers of the rising generation.

It is to this very theory, dreadful in its absurdity that Maupassant subjected himself when he became a fashionable writer. And, as was to be expected, this false ideal led him, in his novels, into a series of mistakes, and into work weaker and more weak still.

In this appears the essential difference between the demands of the novel and of the short story. The object of the novel, even its surface object, is the description

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

of one full human life, or of many; and therefore the novel writer must have a clear and firm idea of what is right and what is wrong in life.

This Maupassant had not; on the contrary, according to the theory he held, such was regarded as undesirable. Had he been a novelist like some talentless writers of sensual novels, he would, being without genius, quietly have described what was wrong as being right, and his novels would have been full and interesting for people of the same views as himself. But Maupassant had genius, i.e., he saw things in their essentials, and therefore involuntarily discovered truth—he involuntarily saw the evil in that which he wished to consider good. This is why, in all his novels except the first, his sympathies continually waver. At one moment he represents wrong as being right; at another, he admits that wrong is wrong, and right is right; at another, again, he keeps shifting from the one standpoint to the other. And this destroys the very essence of every artistic impression, the framework on which it is built. People little sensitive to art often think that a work of art possesses unity when the same personages act in it from beginning to end, when all is built on one and the same fundamental plan of incidents, or when the life of one and the same man is described. This is a mistake; and the unity appears true only to the superficial observer. The cement which binds together every work of art into a whole and thereby produces the effect of life-like illusion, is not the unity of persons and places, but that of the author's independent moral relation to the subject. In reality, when we read or

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

examine the art-work of a new author, the fundamental questions which arise in our mind are always of this kind: "Well, what sort of a man are you? What distinguishes you from all the people I know, and what information can you give me, as to how we must look upon our life?" Whatever the artist depicts, whether it be saints or robbers, kings or lackeys, we seek and see only the soul of the artist himself. And if he be an established writer, with whom we are already acquainted, the question is no longer, "Who are you?" but, "Well, what more can you tell me that is new? From what standpoint will you now illuminate life for me?" Therefore, a writer who has not a clear, definite and fresh view of the universe, and especially a writer who does not even consider this necessary cannot produce a work of art. He may write much and beautifully, but a work of art will not result. So it was with Maupassant in his novels.

[*From GUY DE MAUPASSANT.*
Translated by V. Tchertkoff.]

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

I. TURGÉNIEV

(1818–1883)

THE OLD SCHOOL AND THE NEW

THE battle took place that very evening, while they were taking tea. Paul had come down into the parlour already much irritated and ready for the combat. He waited only for a pretext to throw himself on the enemy; but he had to wait some time. Bazárov habitually spoke little in presence of the "two old fellows," as he called the two brothers; besides, he felt unwell this evening, and swallowed one cup of tea after another in the most complete silence. Paul Petrovich was beside himself with impatience; notwithstanding, he found at last the opportunity he was looking for.

Some conversation arose about a proprietor of the neighbourhood. "Trash; a vile aristocrat," quietly said Bazárov, who had known him at St. Petersburg.

"Allow me to ask you," said Paul Petrovich, with a trembling motion of his lips, "if the words *trash* and *aristocrat* are, in your opinion, synonymous?"

"I said '*vile aristocrat*,'" replied Bazárov, negligently, sipping his tea.

"That is true; but I suppose you put aristocrats

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

and vile aristocrats on the same footing. I think I ought to give you to understand that such is not my opinion. I dare say I am generally regarded as a liberal man and a lover of progress, but that is precisely the reason why I esteem aristocrats, true aristocrats. Recall, my dear sir—(at these words Bazárov looked up at Paul Petrovich)—recall, my dear sir," he repeated with dignity, "the English aristocrats. They do not yield an iota of their rights, and respect no less the rights of others; they exact what is due to them, and themselves never fail in their duties. The aristocracy has given liberty to England, and is its firmest support."

"This is an old song which we have often heard," replied Bazárov. "But what do you intend to prove by this?"

"I intend to prove by this'n, my dear sir"—(Paul Petrovich, when he became angry, used certain familiar phrases, though he knew very well they were improper. This habit goes back to the reign of the Emperor Alexander. The great lords of the time, when they happened to speak their native language, affected a vicious pronunciation, to let it be understood that in their quality of great lords they were allowed to disdain the rules of grammar imposed on scholars. For *this* some would say *this'n*, others *thisy*)—"I intend to prove by this'n that, without the consciousness of personal dignity, without self-respect, and these feelings are familiar to the aristocracy, there could not exist solid foundations for the—*bien public*—for the public edifice. The individual, the personality, my dear sir, that is the

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

essential part; the human personality ought to be as resisting as a rock, for all rests on this basis. I know very well that you find my manners, my dress, even my habits of neatness, ridiculous; but all this comes from self-respect, from the feeling of duty, yes, yes, sir, of duty. I live in the interior of the country, but I don't abandon myself for that; I respect man in my own person."

"I beg your pardon, Paul Petrovich," replied Bazárov; "you say that you respect yourself, and you remain seated with folded arms; what advantage does that procure for the *bien public*? Supposing that you did not respect yourself, what would you do differently?"

Paul Petrovich grew pale.

"That is quite another question," he replied; "I do not care to explain to you now why I remain with folded arms, as you are pleased to say. I should like to confine myself to recalling to you that aristocracy reposes on a principle, and that immoral or worthless men are the only ones that can live in our day without principles. I said it to Arcadi, the day after his arrival, and I only repeat it to you to-day. Is it not true, Nicholas?"

Nicholas Petrovich nodded assent.

"Aristocracy, liberalism, principles, progress," repeated Bazárov, meanwhile. "What strange words in our language, and perfectly useless! A true Russian has no use for them."

"What does he need then, according to you? To understand you, we are outside of humanity, outside

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

of its laws. That is too much; the logic of history exacts——"

"What need have we of that kind of logic? We can get on very well without it."

"How?"

"Ah! Look here. I think that you do very well without logic in putting a piece of bread in your mouth when you are hungry. What is the good of all these abstractions?"

Paul Petrovich raised his hands.

"I do not understand you at all! You insult the Russian people. I don't understand that one can help recognising principles and rules! What then directs you in life?"

"I have already told you, uncle, that we do not recognise any authority," interrupted Arcadi.

"We act in view of what we recognise as useful," added Bazárov; "to-day it seems to us useful to deny, and we deny."

"Everything?"

"Everything."

"What! not only art, poetry, but even—I hesitate to say it——"

"Everything," repeated Bazárov, with inexpressible calmness.

Paul Petrovich looked at him fixedly; he did not expect such a reply; Arcadi blushed with pleasure.

"Excuse me, excuse me," interrupted Nicholas Petrovich; "you deny everything, or to speak more exactly, you destroy everything—notwithstanding, it is also necessary to rebuild——"

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

"That does not concern us. It is necessary in the first place to clear the ground."

"The actual condition of the people exacts it," added Arcadi, with a grave air; "we ought to fulfil this duty; we have no right to give ourselves up to the satisfactions of personal selfishness."

This last phrase displeased Bazárov; it savoured of philosophy, that is, romanticism, for he gave that name also to philosophy; but he did not deem it expedient to contradict his young pupil.

"No, no," cried Paul Petrovich, in a sudden outburst. "I do not wish to believe that you, gentlemen, have a just opinion of the Russian people; that you express what it demands, its secret wishes! No, the Russian people is not such as you represent it. It has a holy respect for tradition; it is patriarchal; it cannot live without faith."

"I shall not try to contradict you," replied Bazárov. "I am even ready to admit that you are right this time."

"But if I am right——"

"That proves absolutely nothing."

"Absolutely nothing," repeated Arcadi, with the assurance of an experienced chess player who, having foreseen a move that his adversary believes dangerous, does not appear at all disconcerted.

"How does that prove nothing?" said Paul Petrovich, with stupefaction. "You separate yourself then from your people?"

"But do not you also? The people believe that when it thunders, the prophet Elijah is driving his chariot through heaven. Well, shall I share its opinion

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

in that respect? You believe that you will confound me by saying that the people is Russian; and I, am I not Russian, too?"

"No; after all that you have just said, you are not Russian! I can no longer recognise you as such."

"My grandfather drove a cart," replied Bazárov, with triumphant pride. "Ask the first one of your peasants which of us two, you or me, he would most gladly recognise as his fellow citizen. You do not even know how to talk with him."

"And you, who know, talk with him and despise him at the same time."

"Why not, if he deserves it? You blame the direction of my ideas; but who tells you that it is accidental, that it is not determined by the general spirit of this people whom you defend so well?"

"Come now! Nihilists are very useful indeed!"

"Whether they are or not is not for us to decide. Do not you suppose yourself also good for something?"

"Gentlemen, gentlemen, no personalities, I beg of you," said Nicholas Petrovich, rising.

Paul Petrovich smiled, and laying his hand on his brother's shoulder, compelled him to sit down.

"Be quiet," he said, "I shall not forget myself, precisely by reason of that feeling of dignity that our friend, the doctor, quizzes. Allow me," he continued, addressing Bazárov again, "you believe, perhaps, that your way of seeing is new? That is your error. The materialism that you profess has already been in honour more than once, and has always shown itself inadequate."

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

"Another foreign word," replied Bazárov. He began to be vexed, and his face had taken a coppery tinge, very unpleasant to see. "Besides, I will tell you that we do not preach; that is not one of our habits."

"What do you do then?"

"I am going to tell you. We have begun by calling attention to the bribery of office-holders, to the want of roads, to the absence of trade, to the manner in which justice is administered."

"Yes, yes, you are 'denouncers'; that is the name that has been given you, if I am not mistaken. I agree with you in a great number of your criticisms; but——"

"Then, we have not delayed to recognise the fact that it is not enough to talk about the sore spots which annoyed us, that this resulted only in platitudes and doctrinarianism; we perceived that our advanced men, our 'denouncers,' were worth absolutely nothing; that we were busy with foolishness, such as art for art's sake, the creative power that is ignorant of itself, parliamentarianism, the need of lawyers, and a thousand other trifles, while it was necessary to think of our daily bread, while the grossest superstition was smothering us, while all our co-operative societies were becoming bankrupt, and this only because there was a dearth of honest people, while the very liberty of the serfs, that the Government is so busy with, will perhaps do no good, because our peasant is ready to steal from himself to go and drink poisoned drugs in the taverns."

"Well," replied Paul Petrovich, "very well. You have discovered all that and you are not less decided not to undertake anything seriously."

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

"Yes, we have decided not to undertake anything seriously," repeated Bazárov in a brusque tone.

He reproached himself all at once for having said so much on that subject before this gentleman.

"And you confine yourself to insult?"

"We insult at need."

"And this is what is called nihilism?"

"This is what is called nihilism," repeated Bazárov, but this time in a peculiarly provoking tone.

Paul Petrovich winced a little.

"Very well!" he said with a forced calm that was rather strange. "Nihilism ought to remedy everything, and you are our saviours and our heroes. Wonderful! But why do you so insult the rest—those whom you call talkers? Don't you talk like them?"

"Well, come now! If we have anything to reproach ourselves with, it is not that," responded Bazárov between his teeth.

"What! Do you maintain that you act, or only prepare for action?"

Bazárov remained silent. Paul Petrovich trembled, but he calmed himself almost instantly.

"H'm! Act, destroy," he said; "but how can one destroy without even knowing what he destroys?"

"We destroy because we are a force," said Arcadi gravely.

Paul Petrovich raised his eyes to his nephew's face and smiled.

"Yes, force has no account to render," added Arcadi, straightening himself up.

"Unhappy boy!" cried Paul Petrovich, unable

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

to contain himself longer. "If you would only render account of what you support in Russia with your ridiculous opinions! That is really too much; one would have to have the patience of an angel to endure all that! Force! The savage Kalmuck and the Mongol have force; but in what can they help us? What ought to be precious to us is civilisation; yes, yes, my dear sirs, the fruits of civilisation. And do not tell me that these fruits are insignificant; the most wretched sign-dauber, *un barbouilleur*, the miserable player of polkas and waltzes that earns a penny an evening, are more useful than you; because they are representatives of civilisation, and not of the brute force of the Mongols! You believe yourselves advanced men, and your place should be in a Kalmuck's cart! Force! Remember, forcible sirs, that you are perhaps a dozen in all, while the rest are counted by millions, and will not permit you to tread under foot their most holy beliefs; they will crush you!"

"If they crush us, th e road is theirs," replied Bazárov "but you are far out in your calculation. We are not so few as you suppose."

"What! You seriously believe that you can bring the entire people to reason?"

"A penny candle—you know the proverb—was enough to burn the whole city of Moscow," answered Bazárov.

"That is it, that is it; first an almost Satanic pride; then irony in very bad taste. This is what allures youth; this is what seduces the inexperienced hearts of these boys! Stop, here is one who holds to your

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

side; he is almost in ecstasy before you!"—(Arcadi turned away and frowned.)—"And this contagion has already extended far and wide. I am assured that at Rome our painters no longer set foot in the Vatican; they treat Rafael as an idiot, because he is an authority, as they say, and those who express themselves thus are impotence personified; their imagination does not get beyond the 'young girl at the fountain'; they may do as they please, their efforts do not get beyond that! And take notice that this picture even is detestable. Yet you hold these fellows in high esteem, do you not?"

"As for me," replied Bazárov, "I would not give a a farthing for Rafael, and I don't think the others worth any more than he."

"Bravo! Bravo! Do you hear, Arcadi? That is the way our young contemporaries ought to express themselves! Oh, I understand very well that they press on your steps! Once they felt the need of learning; not caring to pass for ignorant people, they were forced to work; now they can content themselves with saying, 'All is only nonsense and folly in this world,' and the trick is played. They have indeed reason to rejoice; formerly they were only blockheads; but now they are transformed into nihilists."

"It seems to me that you forget the feeling of personal dignity that you make so much of," Bazárov phlegmatically replied, while indignation coloured the brow and animated the eyes of Arcadi.

"Our discussion has carried us much too far, and I believe that we should do well to stop here. I shall agree with you," he added rising, "when you have

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

pointed out to me in our society a single institution, not more, that does not deserve to be completely and perfectly abolished."

"I could cite you a million," cried Paul Petrovich, "a million! Hold; the village community, for example."

A cold smile contracted the lips of Bazárov.

"As for the village community," he replied, "you would much better speak to your brother about it. I suppose he ought to know what is the truth about the community, and the strict mutual protection societies of the peasantry, their temperance, and many other pleasantries of that kind."

"And the family—the family, such as we find it among our peasants," said Paul Petrovich.

"There also is a question that you would do well in my opinion not to sound. Follow my advice, Paul Petrovich, give yourself two or three days of reflection; you will not find anything on the spot. Pass in review all our classes one after the other, and reflect well on them; during this time, Arcadi and I will——"

"Turn all to ridicule," answered Paul Petrovich.

"No, we will busy ourselves with dissecting frogs. Come, Arcadi. Good night, gentlemen."

The two friends went out. Paul Petrovich and his brother remained alone and confined themselves for some minutes to exchanging looks in silence.

"Well," said Paul Petrovich at last, "where is our youth gone! Heavens—our successors!"

[*FATHERS AND CHILDREN*, *Ch.* 10. *Translated by E. Schuyler.*]

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

D. VON VÍZIN

(1745–1792)

THE BRIGADIER'S VISIT

CHARACTERS

The Brigadier.
His wife, Akulina.
His Son.
The Councillor.
His wife, Eudoxia.
His daughter, Sophia.
Mr. Goodlove.

(*The Brigadier is visiting the Councillor to affiance his son to Sophia, the latter's daughter. At the same time he becomes enamoured of the Councillor's wife, who, however, prefers his son. The Councillor makes advances to the Brigadier's avaricious wife, but she is too stupid to understand. The Brigadier's son, having spent a month or two at Paris, talks the fashionable frenchified dialect of the period—the latter half of the eighteenth century.*)

AKULINA (*enters with her son*): Don't be obstinate, my dearest! Why shouldn't you marry Sophia?

SON: Mamma, it's quite sufficient to see you and Papa to get a complete *aversiong* to marriage.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

AKULINA: Why, dear? We're not absolutely paupers. We've only got a little money, it's true; but it doesn't run away.

SON: Little or none, *say lar mame shose*—it's quite the same to me.

AKULINA: Quite the same, dear? Sometimes one wants a penny, and you can't find them just by digging! What strange ideas you've got all of a sudden! Why, manure's gone up to a penny; besides, you can get a good full meal for a penny.

SON: Mamma, I had rather go hungry than be full for a penny.

AKULINA: As you like, darling. If you didn't have your dinner to-day, and nothing to eat to-morrow, you might be glad of a crust.

SON: In that case, I dare say, even a born Frenchman might condescend to eat crusts. Anyhow, Mamma, when you speak of anything Russian, I'd like to be a hundred French miles away from you; especially when it's connected with my getting married.

AKULINA: Why, darling? We've given our word already.

SON: I haven't.

AKULINA: What has that to do with us? It's our business to find you a bride, and your business to marry her. It isn't your turn yet; so don't interfere.

SON: What, *mar mare*? I'm to get married, but not to choose my wife?

AKULINA: Precisely. How did your father marry? How did I marry him? We never heard a word about each other. I'd never in all my life spoken to him

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

before the marriage, and it was only two clear weeks after it that I began to talk to him at all.

SON: Since then you have had too much to say to each other.

AKULINA: Heaven grant that you'll manage to live as we do!

SON: *Dieu mong prayserve!*

AKULINA: Heaven's grace and my blessing be upon you!

SON: *Trays oblijay!*

AKULINA: Either I'm deaf or you're dumb.

SON: *Nee lurn nee lote.*

AKULINA: Whatever shall we do, darling? What on earth are you talking to me in?

SON: I beg your pardon; I forgot I must speak to you in Russian.

AKULINA: Dearest boy, either teach me French or forget it yourself. I see that I can't understand you, nor speak to you myself. (*Exit.*)

SON: Just as you like. (EUDOXIA, *the Councillor's wife, enters.*)

EUDOXIA: Do you know what, sweetheart? I believe your father is jealous; we must hide our love as much as possible.

SON: *Mardarm*, is it possible to hide a flame, and such a fierce one?—*car jer brool, mwar.*

EUDOXIA: I'm afraid that your father and my fool of a husband will discover our flame and put it out.

SON: Yes, *voos avay raison.* They are just the sort of people that like interfering in other people's business.

EUDOXIA: Particularly my husband! There's no-

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

thing he likes better than to be mixed up *marl arpropo* in something which doesn't concern him. The less business he has with our flame, the more interest he'll take in it.

SON: *Voos avay rayson.* What business has he with it?

EUDOXIA: Well, of course, dearest, he says that man and wife are one.

SON: All the better. *Par consekong,* if you are in love with me, he ought to be glad you love me.

EUDOXIA: Of course he contra*dees* himself.

SON: Madame, you have not been to Paris, and yet you know all the French words! *Avoo-ay,* have you ever had any *connaysons* with Frenchmen?

EUDOXIA (*shocked*): No, sweetheart, I couldn't do anything like that, the way I was brought up in Moscow!

SON: *Eh poorkwar?* Aren't there plenty of Frenchmen there?

EUDOXIA: I didn't know any one—(*contemptuously*)—except my teachers.

SON: Do you know who our French teachers are? What if most of them are illiterates; they're very, very expensive. Do you know that I—I whom you see before you—before I went to Paris, I boarded with a French coachman!

EUDOXIA: If that's the case, darling, *je voo demarnd pardong.* From this moment I shall ever cherish a real veneration for French coachmen.

SON: I can recommend them. To one of them I owe my love of the French and my coolness towards

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

the Russians. A young man is like wax. If I, *malerersmong*, had fallen in with a Russian who loved his country, I should perhaps not be what I am.

EUDOXIA: It's your good luck, sweetheart, and mine too, that you fell in with a French coachman.

SON: Well, let's leave the coachman, and talk about my father and your husband.

EUDOXIA: Sweetheart, is it possible to descend from so elevated a subject to one so low?

SON: For wise people nothing is impossible.

EUDOXIA: Well, what is the matter?

SON: We must take measures, *pronder nose mesures.* (*The* BRIGADIER *enters on one side; on the other the* COUNCILLOR.)

EUDOXIA: I love you, and I am ready to do anything for you.

SON: Anything! (*Falls on his knees.*) *Eedol der mong arm!*

BRIGADIER: Bah! What's this? Am I awake or dreaming?

COUNCILLOR: O my Lord! O my God! Am I not betrayed?

SON (*startled*): *Servitter trays ombel.*

BRIGADIER: My boy, I want to talk Russian to you now!

EUDOXIA (*to her husband*): You're out of your wits, my dear. What's the matter with you?

COUNCILLOR: What's the matter with me, you wicked woman? Didn't you tell this young rascal you were willing to do anything for love of him?

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

SON: What are you calling me names for, Papa?—Let 'em quarrel!

BRIGADIER: No, young man, I'm going to give you a good hiding.

EUDOXIA: What! You're going to beat him because, just out of *pollytess*, he went on his knees to me?

BRIGADIER: Yes, my dear lady. I saw him; I saw him.—(*To* COUNCILLOR.)—I congratulate you, old fellow, on changing your son-in-law into a brother-in-law.

COUNCILLOR: O my Creator! O my Lord! What a God-forsaken business!

BRIGADIER: Remember, old fellow; I told you: Look after your wife; don't let her loose!—And there you are! We're relatives-in-law, but not in the right way. You're insulted; so is your daughter—(*Glances at* EUDOXIA, *sighs, aside*)—and I no less.

SON (*to* COUNCILLOR): What does it matter, *mossoo*? You wanted me as a relative. I'm willing to be one.

COUNCILLOR: Oh, you wicked woman! You've robbed me of my honour, of my last treasure.

BRIGADIER (*angrily*): If that's all the treasure you've got left, you old matchmaker, you're not any too well off. You're not worth running away from.

COUNCILLOR: Judge for yourselves, reasonable men! Even that little treasure I entrusted into such hands. (*Points to wife. Enter* AKULINA, SOPHIA *and* GOODLOVE.)

AKULINA: Treasure? What treasure? Have you found one? Praise be to Heaven!

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

BRIGADIER: We've found a treasure we never expected.

AKULINA: What's the matter?

BRIGADIER (*points to* COUNCILLOR): He's got the best of it.

COUNCILLOR (*to* AKULINA): My accursed wife, fearing neither God nor man, has fallen in love with your son, my own intended son-in-law.

AKULINA (*laughs*): Ha, ha, ha! My dear sir, what rubbish! My son has got a bride; why should he fall in love with her? Not likely!

SON: Of course not. And if it were so, decent people wouldn't be angry at such a trifle, *poor oon bagatell.* People who know the world, would laugh at it.

BRIGADIER: If any one were such a fool as to make advances to my wife, I shouldn't wait for any explanations. I'd smash his ribs for him, wherever I met him.

COUNCILLOR: Oh dear no, sir. I know what to do with your son. He has dishonoured me—and I know how much my dishonour is legally worth.

AKULINA: What! We pay for your dishonour! Heavens above!—why?

COUNCILLOR: Because, madam, my honour is my dearest possession. I'll make you pay every penny of the damages. I won't abate a farthing.

BRIGADIER: Listen! Even if the matter does get as far as damages, my son will have to pay only half; let your wife pay the rest. They dishonoured you together, you see.

AKULINA: They are each half to blame.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

EUDOXIA (*to husband*): Don't you want him as a son-in-law?

COUNCILLOR: Hold your peace, accursed woman!

SOPHIA: Papa, after what my suitor has done, let me say I will never marry him.

COUNCILLOR: I quite agree with you.

GOODLOVE (*to* SOPHIA): My hopes are flattered.

BRIGADIER: Nor do I want my son to have such a particularly chaste mother-in-law.—As for you, my son, I'll settle with you with this stick.

COUNCILLOR: Very well, sir; you chastise him with your stick, and I shall with my damages.

SON: Father, don't take any notice of him! He's not fit to stand beside his wife.

EUDOXIA (*to husband*): Traitor! Barbarian! Tyrant!

COUNCILLOR (*startled*): What—what's the matter?

SON (*to* COUNCILLOR): Didn't I see you on your knees before my mother?

BRIGADIER: On his knees! Bah! Before whom?

SON: Yes, before my mother.

BRIGADIER: You hear him, sir? What does this mean?

COUNCILLOR: I dare not look towards Heaven.

BRIGADIER (*to* AKULINA): He made advances to you, you old fool, and you didn't tell me!

AKULINA: My dear man, to tell the honest truth, I didn't realize it myself at the time. I was told about it afterwards.

BRIGADIER: Well, sir, I'm going to settle with my son myself. Now I see you really will have a case

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

against us, not for dishonouring you, but for murdering you!

COUNCILLOR (*frightened*): O your excellency! The Lord will punish me Himself for my sins. Forgive me, who have sinned before you.

SON: *Mong pair*, be respectable!

BRIGADIER: Don't you tell me what to do, my boy! Remember, I'm going to give you a good hiding too.

EUDOXIA: What do you intend to do? (*Approaches* BRIGADIER.) Didn't you tell me, at this very place, how you loved me?

COUNCILLOR: Eh, eh? What's this, sir?

BRIGADIER (*more quietly*): Yes, sir?

COUNCILLOR: Whom is she talking about?

BRIGADIER: About me.

COUNCILLOR: So you, sir, came to my house to tempt my wife?

BRIGADIER: Very well, then; I'll go home.

COUNCILLOR: Without a moment's delay!

BRIGADIER: Not an instant! I can quite see the sort of honest and respectable people I've fallen among. Son, order the carriage immediately! Wife, we'll leave this house, where I, an honest man, have nearly been turned into a rogue.

AKULINA: My dear, let me just get my things together.

BRIGADIER: No, you'll go as you stand.

COUNCILLOR: And what you leave behind becomes mine.

SON (*falling into* EUDOXIA'S *arms*): *Ad-yer, lar mwarti der mong arm!*

EUDOXIA (*embracing* SON): *Ad-yer*, my sweetheart.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

(BRIGADIER *and* COUNCILLOR *rush to separate them.*)

BRIGADIER: Come here, you puppy!

COUNCILLOR: O you wicked woman! O my God!

BRIGADIER (*mocking*): 'O my God!' No, sir. I see that the man who has God most on his tongue, has the Devil most in his heart. Away, all my people!

COUNCILLOR (*following* AKULINA): Good-bye, beloved, good-bye. (BRIGADIER, AKULINA, *and* SON *go out.*) O God, Thou punishest us for our misdeeds! But, Sophia dear, why did you lose your suitor?

GOODLOVE: If, sir, you consent to our wishes. I shall become her betrothed, and think myself a very fortunate man.

COUNCILLOR: What! You've come into the possession of two thousand serfs, and haven't changed your intentions?

GOODLOVE: Nothing on earth would induce me to change them.

COUNCILLOR: Sophia, are you willing to marry him?

SOPHIA: If you and mamma do not object, I should be very happy indeed to be his wife.

EUDOXIA: I will never stand in the way of your happiness.

COUNCILLOR: If so, be affianced!

GOODLOVE (*to* SOPHIA): Our wishes are fulfilled. How happy I am!

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

SOPHIA: I can be happy only with you.

COUNCILLOR: Be happy! But God hath punished my sins sufficiently. (*Points to wife.*) Here is my Gehenna.

EUDOXIA: I wish you, children, a happy *footoor;* but I must suffer until death. (*Points to husband.*) Here is my Tartarus.

COUNCILLOR (*to the Audience*): People say it is hard to live with a conscience; now I have discovered that to live without a conscience is the worst thing on earth.

[*THE BRIGADIER, Act V.*
Translated by C. E. Bechhofer.]

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

A. VOLÝNSKY (A. L. FLEXER)

(Born 1863)

DOSTOIEVSKY AND TOLSTÓI

THE extraordinary interest in Dostoievsky at the present time must be considered as a phenomenon of the utmost significance and importance. We are witnessing the flood-tide of a passionate, unceasing interest in him. Some of his works have even been arranged for the stage, and, though the literary side of these adaptations cannot be considered satisfactory, the audiences, nevertheless, seize eagerly upon Dostoievsky's phrases, which fall into the depths of their souls and create there a ferment of ideas. We may say with little fear of contradiction that many people are now reading his books anew and understanding them differently and more fully than before, and with greater individual psychological interest. Not Tolstoi, observe, but Dostoievsky is being summoned to complete the destruction of the old intellectual bases and foundations, and out of the ruins new paths of life and art are opening.

Comparing the works of Tolstoi and Dostoievsky, we cannot but see that Tolstoi is an artist in the simplest sense of the word. He portrays the existing world in its unalterable, let us say, its Old Testament out-

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

lines, in the clear even light of conventional and popularly understood rules of human conduct. Tolstoi belongs to the Old Testament; he is orthodox even when he sketches us people of moral unsettlement and searchings. With all his immense talent, he does not reach that fiery depth out of which all new forms of life arise—those troublous wearinesses and impulses which inaugurate every new epoch of ideas. Even in the philosophic treatises where he sets forth plans for a new life, he obstinately closes his eyes to those inner ferments and the unconscious metaphysic of divinity—the metaphysic of the heart—which is itself more significant and sacred than all philosophic conclusions, and which alone braces the impulses of man towards creative work in life and art. Indeed, Tolstoi is perhaps the oldest man alive. No one else is bound with such strong and heavy fetters to the old world, the world of established ideas and feelings; no one else loves so passionately the artistically complete modes of life and the crystal clearness of the utilitarian morality; like Atlas, he bears upon his mighty shoulders all this old world, which, however, is thirsting for regeneration.

The whole art of this contemporary Titan resembles a huge oak. Human arms cannot encircle its trunk; the roots go out deep into the ground, and the branches, covered with green and sappy leaves, spread widely in the air. It has grown in the moist and fruitful soil and the cool, beneficent shade of the rich Russian countryside. Such oaks do not grow on the heights of cloud-girt mountains, or in the craters of volcanoes. There another life springs. In comparison with the former,

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

it is deformed and chaotic, with endless mists and raging whirlwinds.

The work of Dostoievsky, unlike that of Tolstoi, carries us headlong into the chaotic depths of the human soul. You watch the soul in the process of ferment, with its radical impulses and the strife of its contending forces. For this reason not a single creature in Dostoievsky's books appears petty, limited in content, or possessed of an established, unalterable, circumscribed character. Each of his portraits resembles a geological mass, with inevitable psychological mists and whirlwinds of mad passions. Every one of Dostoievsky's works, from start to finish of his career, presents a congeries of mysterious worlds, which develop before the eyes of the reader as if impelled by the wand of genius. It is difficult to read these books, because it is difficult, almost impossible sometimes, to comprehend all these living worlds and all these new and unexpected truths which flash like lightning upon the darkness of the infinite horizon. These truths make Dostoievsky, unlike Tolstoi, an especially vital force in an epoch of spiritual turmoil and searchings. Tolstoi may be said to approach the new world too in the spirit of the Old Testament; he aims at mortifying in man the ever aching nerves of metaphysical contentment. Tolstoi takes from the inspired legend of Christ a sober programme for a good moral life. Dostoievsky, without wrenching any dogmatic elements from this universal legend of salvation, has been able to transform it in all its fantastic beauty into a mighty leaven of new and vast reforms. He does not regard the name of Christ as

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

the motionless starting-point for various moral directions, but as a symbol of the eternal flame of the soul, a symbol of the spiritual passions which through crucifixion come to the final initiation.

Two features stand out plainly in the enormous elemental talent of Dostoievsky—his fiery self-consciousness and his extraordinary mental strength. To continue the parallel with Tolstoi, we must say that in these respects Dostoievsky is both profounder and more exalted than Tolstoi; and, to relate the word to ideas, he is newer. In Tolstoi we find vast creative work accompanied by laborious and accurate self-knowledge, but his consciousness, clear and humane as it is, is directed towards the outer world. Even when he talks of himself and analyses his soul or the souls of men like him, he never reaches those depths where man still lives in a troublous, uncrystallised turmoil, with perceptions and feelings that bring him near to the secrets of life. Tolstoi does not perceive the metaphysical element in himself. He has not the self-perception of Dostoievsky. His talent creates artistic phenomena, for which his mind cannot find equivalent definitions and expressions. But it is just this fiery self-perception from which Dostoievsky draws the material for his bold metaphysical ideas. Even his mighty and indefatigable logic is only another expression of his unconscious perceptions, of the whirlwinds within himself. In this logic the passionate flame and the insatiable impulse towards the infinite are again seen. It is as if his logic drew a deep breath and, sinking intrepidly into the unknown, dived beneath the visible

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

surface of things. Reaching the ultimate revelations and grasping its own essence in lightning-like, piercing self-perception, the soul of Dostoievsky attains the highest, the Pythian ecstasy. But when his nervous system was too much overstrained, this reacted upon his weak human organism in the form of terrible epileptic strokes. This is the penalty on earth for coming near to God.

The true artist peers into his own soul by way of this self-perception, as through a narrow cleft. He sees there the basic forces of life, its metaphysical elements and its feelings and prejudices, and, better still, absolute truth, and God. With these new spiritual perceptions, which surrender to him only at the price of inner convulsions, the artist returns to the phenomenal world a new man. Ordinary people, looking at things with the eye of reason, think him mad. He walks among them a fantastic creature, bearing in his soul the secrets of the night, the riddle of the far-off sparkling stars and the weighty silence of the sleeping world—all this which contradicts so extraordinarily the daylight workaday world.

Such a mighty madman among men was Dostoievsky. Nothing was hid from him in the conflicts between the personal and the impersonal elements of life, between God and godlessness. Thus every one of his works, full of the highest ecstasy, appears a true tragedy. We think that the life and manners of a madhouse are being shown to us, but all the time the psychology of his heroes, displayed in swift artistic experiments, is essentially the psychology of every living man, but

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

carried to an extreme of insane violence and acuteness.

If there were no great madmen like Dostoievsky, man would not know his real depth, nor, perhaps, realise so clearly his relation to the inner, higher worlds. Nowhere as in the works of Dostoievsky can we follow so closely the painful conflict of the opposing elements in man of good and evil, the "deophil" and "deophobe" tendencies of his character, the struggles of demoniacal beauty, and the calm revelations of the heart—all the varied strivings of the soul towards the infinite, and the mighty reactions they produce in it.

[*From DOSTOIEVSKY.*
Translated by C. E. Bechhofer.]

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft®

BALLADS AND FOLK SONGS

I

THE COMING OF NIKÍTA

Enters the hall
An unknown man:
The cloak he wears
Is of striped damask;
His neck-cloth is
Of sable black;
The buttons he wears,—
Of a jester's motley!
The button-holes
Are of white silk;
On his feet are boots
Of green morocco:
The heels are sewn;
The toes are broad;
But under the heels
Fierce snakes embroidered;
So gently he stepped,
A sparrow escaped him:
He made obeisance;
Observing the form
He made his homage,
In learned wise;

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

And bows his forehead
To Prince Vladímir,
Then to the Queen
Apráxina.
"Hail, Vladímir,
Enthroned in Kíev!
Thou feedest and keepest
Thy noble vassals
And foreign champions,
Heroes from afar.
I have come to thee
To serve thee well,
With fealty
Untreasonable.
A thousand Tartars
In the field I fear not;
Nor of the Tartars
A second thousand:
Nor would I take flight
At a thousand more.
Were thirty sparrows
Vigil against me?"
Below the salt
Sit thirty nobles,
And thirty heroes.
Nikíta approached
To the oaken table;
Took up a goblet
Of pure silver;
Filled the goblet
With the green wine;

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Drained the goblet;
And then put it
In his pocket.
Nikítushka
Left the banquet:
Banged the portals!
Broke the hinges!
The tempered parapets
Crashed and crumbled.

So hush, my babes!
Squall not, brawl not!
Do not whimper;
He might have heard you,
Nikíta Iványch!
And if he hears you,
Back he will hurry;
Us and the household
He will scatter!
Will not leave one,
Grey-haired or flaxen,
To tell the tale!
Will rend to shreds
Vladímir's splendour.
So hail! Farewell!
Vladímir the Mighty,
Enthroned in Kíev!

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

II

ALYOSHA, THE PRIEST'S SON, AND TUGARIN

In Kiev the capital, in Kiev city,
When Prince Vladímir ruled us nobly,
A marvel was revealed, a portent!
Túgarin Zmyeyévich sallied forth.
Vladimir, the sun of the city of Kiev,
Was heading his princely and pompous feast,
And invited Tugarin to his mighty feast!
The oaken tables were all set up,
And honey drinks poured forth like a river,
And sugared sweetmeats covered the board.
Tugarin was gulping a swan's white flesh,
But Alyósha Popóvich was sitting at hand.
And Alyosha Popovich spake in this wise:
"When I still abode at my father's homestead,
My father León, the priest of Rostóv,
Now he had a hound, so sorry and mangy,
A hound all grizzled and grey.
It grabbed at a bone which was much too big,
And, where it grabbed, it burst and split!
And thus will I deal with Tugarin Zmyeyevich,
Will I, Alyosha the Priest's son!"
And Tugarin went bibbing the wine, the green wine,
A glass at a time he guzzled down!

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

Whilst Alyosha bespoke him in this wise:
"When I still abode at my sire's homestead,
My father Leon, the priest of Rostov,
He had a big cow, a monster,
Who swallowed her drinks by pailfuls,
And when she had drunk it, she burst!
And thus will I do by Tugarin Zmyeyevich,
I will burst him, I, Alyosha Popovich!"
Tugarin beliked not these gentle speeches,
And he pulled on the table a sharp steel knife,
And hurtled it by Alyosha.
By the stove, the glaze-bricked stove,
His servant Maryshko Paránov was standing
And caught the knife as it flew,
And addressed the knife in this wise:
"Ho, health to you, Alyosha Levontyevich;
Is it me you will send, or will you fend
In the fight with Tugarin Zmyeyevich?"
Where the grebe and the legless diver ply,
Tugarin fled to the open fields,
And thither Alyosha went on the morrow.
Alyosha went to the open fields;
He shot at Tugarin Zmyeyevich,
Tugarin Zmyeyevich he slew.
And therefore the ages sing of Alyosha
Where the blue sea rolls in peace,
And tell the tale for good folk to hear.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

III

THE HAWK-SHIP

Oceanwards, oceanwards, on the blue ocean-waves,
The ocean, on the Caspian,
Sailed the Hawk-ship for thirty whole years,
On its anchor the Hawk-ship ne'er lingered.
Nor ever beheld the coast-sand yellowing.
And bedecked handsomely was the great Falcon-ship,
The hulls were becarved like a wild beast;
The beak and the stern, like a serpent.
At the stern young Polkán, the hero, was sitting;
The captain supreme was Ilyá Múromets.
And Ilya wore a cloak of orange damask;
Ilya paced the decks of the vessel;
Ilya with a truncheon smote the rivets.
But pirates attacked the Hawk-ship suddenly,
Monstrous Tartars, cruel Kalmucks,
Our poor little Hawk-ship to shatter and batter.
Yet Ilya on the shipboards kept pacing,
With his truncheon beating the rivets,
And the golden rivets reverberate.
Savage lions on them began roaring:
So the pirates were affrighted,
And fled to the mountains in terror.

[*Translated by L. A. Magnus.*]

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

IV

OUT OF THE TREES

Out of the trees, the darkest trees,
Out of the mountains, highest mountains,
Flew a flight of grey, grey geese
And a flight of white, white swans.
When the swans away had flown,
One white swan was left alone;
And that white, white swan approaches
To the flight of grey, grey geese.

"Do not squeak, ye geese so grey;
Not of my will came I hither;
But the weather carried me,
The noon-tide, cold, cold weather,
The noon-tide weather carried me,
Weeping, weeping bitterly,
As was once the maiden brought
To the youth in his wide court.

"There she wept most bitterly.—
All began to blame and scold
The weeping maiden; then said she:
'Do not scold, ye women old,
Do not scold me—that I'm young!
Not of my will came I here;
Me the horses tall and strong
Of the brave good youth did bear.'"

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

V

THE EXILE

When the may and the palm on the thawing flood are whirled,
At that time my mother bare me in the world;
Nor taking thought with reason, she gave me to be wed
To a far and foreign country from the land where I was bred.

And the far and foreign country dries me without wind,
And my far and foreign parents blame without I sinned;
Here, far from my dear mother, three years shall I stay;
In the fourth to my dear mother as a bird I'll fly away.

The sorrowfullest bird, the cuckoo shall I be,
And I shall wait my mother in her own green garden tree.
My wails shall dry the garden, my tears shall make it flow,
And I shall tear my own dear mother's heart in two.

And then my own dear mother shall pass into the hall;
Her son's wives—the swallows!—she wakens with her call.
"What sadly singing bird is this within our garden green?"
The elder bride, she bids them to let the bird be slain.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

The younger bride, she begs them awhile their hand to
stay;
And my own born sister, weeping there, doth say:
"Oh, has not our own sad sister hither come,
Flying as a bird from her far and foreign home?"

[*Translated by C. E. Bechhofer.*]

APPENDIX

PUSHKIN'S *MOZART AND SALIERI*

Scene I

SALIERI (*alone*) : All men say that there is no justice in the world.—Nor is there justice in Heaven ! I am as sure of this as I am of the simplest scale. I was born with a love for art. When I was a boy and the organ pealed out in our ancient church, I used to listen and lose myself in listening ; and my tears flowed, involuntary but sweet. Early I turned my back upon idle pleasures. I became indifferent to all the arts save music ; I renounced them obstinately, arrogantly, and devoted myself to music alone. Difficult was the first step, and dull the first approach. I overcame these early trials. I made the craft the basis of my art, and became a craftsman. I trained my fingers to be quick, obedient and firm, and my ear to be accurate. I slaughtered sounds and dissected their music like a corpse. I verified harmony by algebra. Then, proved in the art, I dared to surrender myself to the rapture of creative work. I began to compose, but in silence, in secret, not daring yet to dream of fame. Often I used to sit in my silent cell for two or three whole days and nights together, forgetting sleep and food, and tasting the rapture and tears

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

of inspiration—and then I would burn my work, and coldly watch my thought and the notes, my children, vanish in a blaze and a puff of smoke. And is this all ?—When the great Gluck appeared and revealed to us new mysteries—profound, enthralling mysteries—did I not abandon all I knew before, all I loved so well and believed so fervently ? And did I not go out bravely to follow and obey him, like a man who has lost his way and is set right by a stranger ? At last, with earnest, tense application I attained a high degree in the infinite art. Fame smiled upon me ; I found men's hearts in tune with my creations. I was happy. I delighted peacefully in my work and success and fame, and in the work and successes of my friends, my comrades in the marvellous art. No ! I never knew envy ! No, never ! Not even when Piccini captivated the ears of the barbarous Parisians ; not even when I heard for the first time the opening bars of *Iphigenia*. Who can say that proud Salieri was ever a contemptible envier—like a snake which has been trodden under foot and bites the sand and the dust in its impotence ? No one ! But now—I confess it—now I am envious ! I envy ; I envy profoundly, bitterly !—O Heaven, where is justice, when the divine gift of immortal genius is not sent to reward fervent love, self-sacrifice, labour, effort and prayer, but instead illuminates the head of a madman, of an idle reveller ? O Mozart, Mozart !

(*At this moment* MOZART *enters.*)

MOZART : Aha, you saw me ! And I wanted to play a surprise on you.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

SALIERI: You here! When did you come?

MOZART: Just this moment. I was bringing something to show you, and, as I went past a tavern, I suddenly heard a violin. You never, Salieri, never in your life heard anything so funny. A blind fiddler in the tavern was playing *Voi che sapete.* It was wonderful! I could not help bringing him here to entertain you with his art. Come in, old man! (*A blind old man with a violin enters.*) Play us something from Mozart! (*The old man plays an aria from "Don Juan"; MOZART roars with laughter.*)

SALIERI: And you can laugh?

MOZART: Oh, Salieri, are you not laughing, too?

SALIERI: No. I cannot laugh when a clumsy workman spoils me a Raphael Madonna; I cannot laugh when a contemptible juggler dishonours Dante with a parody. Go away, old man.

MOZART: Here, take this to drink my health with. (*The old man goes out.*) Salieri, you are not in spirits to-day. I will come another time.

SALIERI: What were you bringing me?

MOZART: No—well, a trifle. The other night I could not sleep, and two or three notions came into my head. I sketched them out to-day, and I wanted to hear your opinion. But you have no time to think of me now.

SALIERI: Oh, Mozart, Mozart, when am I not thinking of you?—Sit down; I am listening.

MOZART (*at the piano*): Imagine—whom shall we say? Well, myself—a little younger, and in love—not very much, just lightly—with a beautiful girl

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

or with a friend—yourself, say. I am merry. Suddenly—an apparition from the grave! Darkness!—or something like that. Now listen. (*He plays.*)

SALIERI: You were bringing this to me, and you could stop outside a tavern to listen to a blind fiddler! O Heaven! Mozart, you are not fit to be yourself.

MOZART: Well, do you like it?

SALIERI: What depth! What daring, and what form! Mozart, you are a god, and you do not know. But I—I know.

MOZART (*laughs*): Bah! Really? Perhaps so; but my godhead is famishing.

SALIERI: Listen; let us dine together at the "Golden Lion."

MOZART: If you like; with pleasure. Let me just go home and tell my wife not to expect me at dinner. (*He goes out.*)

SALIERI: I shall wait for you; be sure you—— No! I can oppose my destiny no longer. I am fated to stop him. If I do not, we are all ruined, all we priests and servants of Music, not just I alone and my poor fame. What use is it if Mozart lives and attains still farther heights? Will he raise the art so? No, it will fall again when he disappears. He has no heir to leave us. What use is he? He has come down like a cherub to us children of dust, and brought us a few songs from paradise, so as to awake our unfledged desires and then to fly away again. Fly away, then! And the sooner, the better! (*He draws out a phial.*) Here is poison, the last gift of my Isora. Eighteen years I have carried it. Often life has

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

seemed a hurt not to be endured; often I have sat at one board with an unsuspecting foe, but I never yielded to the whisper of temptation. Not that I am a coward; I feel an insult deeply; I love my life little—but I waited always. When I was tortured by a thirst for death—Why shall I die, I thought; perhaps life will yet bring me unexpected gifts. Perhaps rapture will come to me, and a night of inspired creation. Perhaps a new Haydn will compose a masterpiece, and I shall enjoy it—like a man feasting with a hated guest! Perhaps, I thought, I shall meet a worse foe still; perhaps a still worse offence will come thundering down upon me. Then Isora's gift will not be wasted. And I was right! At last, I have found my enemy; a new Haydn has filled me marvellously with rapture. The time has come! Thou dying gift of love, pass to-day into the bowl of friendship!

Scene II

(MOZART *and* SALIERI *at dinner.*)

SALIERI: Why are you so gloomy to-day, Mozart?

MOZART: I? No.

SALIERI: Surely something is worrying you? The dinner is good, and the wine excellent; but you are silent and melancholy.

MOZART: To tell you the truth, I am disturbed about my Requiem.

SALIERI: Ah! Are you composing a Requiem? Since when?

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

MOZART: A long time—three weeks. A strange thing happened.—Did I not tell you?

SALIERI: No.

MOZART: Listen; one day, three weeks ago, I came home late and I was told that a stranger had called to see me. I do not know why, but all night I wondered who he was, and what he wanted with me. The next day he came again, and again I was not at home. The third day, I was playing on the floor with my little boy when I heard my name called. I went out, and a man dressed all in black bowed to me politely, bespoke a Requiem and vanished. At once I sat down and began to write; but since then my man in black has not come to me. I am glad; I should be sorry to part with the work, although the Requiem is quite finished. But, all the time,——

SALIERI: What?

MOZART: I am ashamed to say it.

SALIERI: To say what?

MOZART: Day and night my man in black gives me no rest. He follows me everywhere, like a shadow. At this very moment it seems to me that he is seated here with us, the third at table!

SALIERI: Come, come; what a child's bogey! Put this nonsense out of your head! Beaumarchais said to me once, "Friend Salieri, whenever dark thoughts beset you, open a bottle of champagne, or read through my *Marriage of Figaro*."

MOZART: Yes, Beaumarchais was a friend of yours. You composed a piece for him, a lovely thing. There

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

is one melody in it—I always repeat it when I am happy. La—la—la—la. Oh, Salieri, is it true that Beaumarchais poisoned some one?

SALIERI: I do not think so; he was not suited for that kind of work.

MOZART: Besides, he was a genius,—as you are, as I am. And genius and villainy are incompatible, are they not?

SALIERI: Do you think so? (*He drops poison into* MOZART'S *glass.*) Come, drink!

MOZART: Your health, friend, and our hearty union! Mozart and Salieri together, two sons of harmony! (*Drinks.*)

SALIERI: Stop, stop, stop! You have drunk—without me?

MOZART (*throws down his serviette*): I have finished. (*He goes to the piano.*) Listen, Salieri; my Requiem. (*He plays.*) You are weeping?

SALIERI: I feel both pain and pleasure—as if I had finished a difficult task, as if the surgeon's knife had cut off from me a suffering limb. Friend Mozart, these tears—do not heed them! Continue; fill my soul again with sound!

MOZART: If all men felt the power of harmony as you do! But, no; the world could not exist. No one would care for the humble needs of life—all men would abandon themselves to unrestrained art. We are few, we chosen priests of the one excellent thing, we idle favourites, neglectful of contemptible profit. Do you not think so? But I do not feel very well now. A sort of heaviness—I must go and sleep. Good-bye.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

SALIERI: Good-bye. (MOZART *goes out.*) Yes, your sleep will be a long one, Mozart!—But can he be right, and I am not a genius? Genius and villainy incompatible?—It is false! What of Michelangelo? Or is that only a silly, vulgar tale, and was the creator of the Vatican not a murderer?

(CURTAIN.)

[*Translated by C. E. Bechhofer.*]

Printed in England
by Butler & Tanner Selwood Printing Works, Frome, Somerset

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

University of California
SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
405 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024-1388
Return this material to the library
from which it was borrowed.

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®

University of California, Los Angeles
L 006 316 641 7

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILI
A 001 304 527

PG
3213
R54r

UNIVERSITY of CALIFORNIA
AT
LOS ANGELES
LIBRARY

Univ Calif - Digitized by Microsoft ®